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For more voices to come!



816 - FEB 2022

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For more voices to come!

We have entered a new year with a solemn reminder that the gains we made in fighting the pandemic are incremental. However, those of us working in international Geneva are used to incremental but steady progress and victories.

We have brought you a short dossier from Paris, on the events and celebrations of the achievements of UNESCO, which celebrated its 75th anniversary. As an organization that seeks to build peace through international cooperation in culture, education and science, the organization is a proud member of the UN family and I am sure you will enjoy learning more. We also have a fascinating story on dogs being used to detect COVID-19, don't miss!

This month is also the two years anniversary of the new identity of our magazine. Back in November 2021, you were introduced to our editorial committee members. In this issue, we have brought our behind-the-scenes team. Take a minute to get to know them and their critical work in support of the high-quality product you enjoy reading.

We hope you will enjoy this issue! ■

Pour plus de voix à venir!

Nous sommes entrés dans une nouvelle année avec un rappel solennel que les améliorations réalisées dans la lutte contre la pandémie sont progressives. Ceux qui travaillent dans le domaine de la Genève internationale comme nous, sont habitués à des progrès et des victoires progressives mais régulières.

Nous partageons avec vous ce petit dossier en provenance de Paris, sur les événements et les réussites de l'UNESCO qui a fêté son 75^e anniversaire. En tant qu'organisation qui cherche à construire la paix grâce à la coopération internationale dans les domaines de la culture, de l'éducation, et de la science, l'organisation reste un membre incontournable de la famille des Nations Unies, et je suis sûr que vous apprécierez d'en apprendre davantage. Nous vous présentons également un article intéressant sur la détection du COVID-19 grâce au flair des chiens à ne pas manquer!

Ce mois-ci est aussi le deuxième anniversaire de la nouvelle identité de notre magazine. En novembre 2021, nous vous avons présenté les membres de notre comité de rédaction. Dans ce numéro, nous partageons les coulisses de notre équipe. Prenez une minute pour apprendre à les connaître, ainsi qu'apprécier leur travail essentiel qui contribue à la réalisation du produit de haute qualité que vous aimez lire.

Nous espérons que vous aimerez ce numéro! ■

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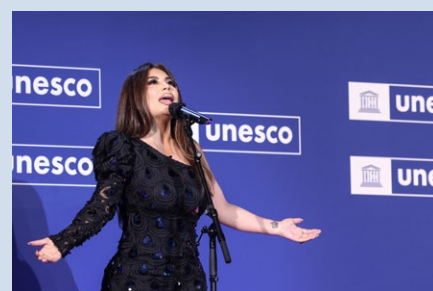
UNESCO 75th Anniversary Celebration Ceremony

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which seeks to build peace through international cooperation. Its headquarters are located in Paris, and last year, it celebrated its 75th anniversary as an organization. newSpecial has the privilege of sharing some pieces focusing on UNESCO and its work.

THE ARTICLES WERE COMPILED BY XIAORONG CHEN AND MAGGIE ZHU, WITH HELP FROM MEIZHI LANG. ALL IMAGES WERE SELECTED BY YIHONG LI.



Twenty-six heads of state and government and an impressive list of artists, singers and musicians from around the world celebrated UNESCO's 75th anniversary at a special ceremony on 12 November 2021. UNESCO's Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation Forest Whitaker opened the proceedings.



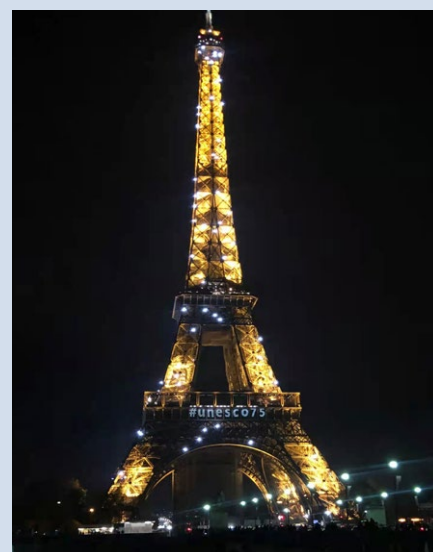
Other highlights included outstanding performances by Aryana Sayeed, an Afghan singer and women's rights activist who recently fled her country, and by four-time Grammy Award winner Angélique Kidjo from Benin. Chinese pianist Lang Lang, one of the most talented classical musicians of our time, and internationally renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma also took part in the celebration.



Renaud Capuçon, one of the world's greatest violinists, and Farrah El Dibany, Egyptian-born opera singer, took the stage. So did the fabulous duo Ray Lema & Laurent de Wilde, who combine jazz, classical and African music, and the group Joussour, whose Arab, Latin, Balkan, Indian and jazz influences resonated at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris for this special concert.



Several heads of state made speeches, which were interspersed with performances by international singers and musicians.



At the close of the ceremony, the nearby Eiffel Tower was illuminated with the UNESCO logo.



Official dinner by Chefs 4 the Planet, at the UNESCO Restaurant

The official dinner to celebrate UNESCO's 75th anniversary was organized by Chefs 4 the Planet, a global information and solutions network for sustainable gastronomy. Honoring UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, the menu was mainly plant-based and seasonal, with the products and ingredients chosen from UNESCO's very own vegetable garden.

The menu included "Mediterranean mezze" entrees with colorful touches from chef Alan Geaam; no waste entrees using 100% of the squash (including skin and seeds) from chef Elis Bond; pike perch from the classified River Loire from chef Christophe Hay; and a "Michoacan" dessert true to Mexican traditions from chef Mercedes Ahumada.

Video interview with UNESCO's social media team

All around the world, chefs are mobilizing to find solutions. How can we be more sustainable in the kitchen?

To be more sustainable in the kitchen, we have to choose local products. That's how we can enjoy the products that the land offers us.

—Mercedes Ahumada, Mexico

What is the zero-waste recipe that your grandparents have been using for years?

It's the broth that my mother used to make. We put carrots, potatoes and herbs. We put everything in there!

—Elis Bond, Haiti.

What is, according to you, a very underrated ingredient?

There is a plant that we call "bad grass" in French, but in Mexico, we call it "cow's tongue". It is an edible plant that we use to give colour to dishes.

—Mercedes Ahumada, Mexico

What do you wish to convey through your cooking?

To create an emotion with what nature gives us.

—Elis Bond, Haiti

Exhibition "The UNESCO Adventure"



An exhibition titled "UNESCO Adventure" was presented during the 41st session of UNESCO's General Conference, highlighting UNESCO's 75 years of commitment to world peace, illustrated by historical covers from The UNESCO Courier magazine. From UNESCO's genesis as an idea to safeguard world peace to the preservation of heritage, from rising to the challenge of education to defending human dignity, from scientific cooperation to the free flow of ideas, the "UNESCO Adventure" exhibition showcased the most important missions and achievements of its history.

This exhibition tells the story of UNESCO's endeavours to understand, preserve and convey the best of our shared humanity: the common thread that joins us in our efforts to transform the world.

Photography installation – Sebastião Salgado



© UNESCO



© Sebastião Salgado



© Sebastião Salgado

From 13 to 17 November, the installation was visible on a giant screen on the side of the wall of Room I in UNESCO's garden. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sebastião Salgado's photos were displayed, set to music by Jean-Michel Jarre (a musical score based on the sounds of the Amazonian forest).

Sebastião Salgado is a Brazilian photographer with a long history of working with UNESCO. He has crisscrossed the Brazilian Amazon, photographing forests, rivers, mountains and the people who live there. He spent several weeks living in local villages, photographing eleven ethnic groups. This deep universe, where the immense power of nature is felt more strongly than almost any other place on earth, has imprinted striking images in the eye of the photographer.

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UNESCO Courier: Transforming Ideas celebrates UNESCO 75

UNESCO 75th Anniversary Limited
Edition Anthology



For UNESCO's 75th birthday, its flagship magazine, *The UNESCO Courier*, celebrated with an anthology of 58 brilliant articles from its archive, never before published in a book of such scope and scale. *UNESCO Courier: Transforming Ideas* was launched officially on 22 November.

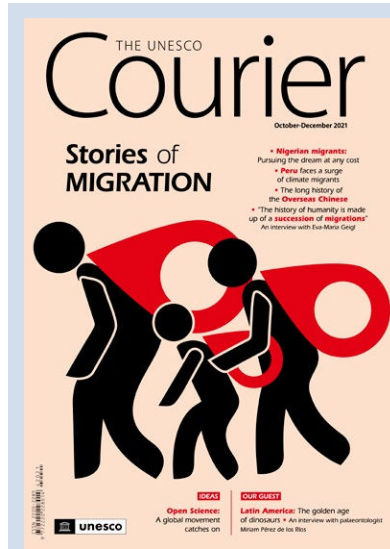


Presented in two volumes – *Volume I: Thinkers* and *Volume II: Creators* – this anthology features 58 of the most influential articles ever published in the magazine's history. It leads readers through an exciting, magical and thought-provoking adventure in UNESCO's past, present and future.

The articles spotlight the *Courier's* celebrated authors who have contributed greatly to society's progress, including anthropologists, historians, scientists, writers, artists and media personalities. Among them are Marie Curie, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Ada Yonath, Paul Dirac, Linus Pauling, Gabriel García Márquez, Dmitri Shostakovich, François Truffaut, Jorge Luis Borges, Luc Jacquet, Amos Oz, Le Corbusier, J.M.G. Le Clézio, Claude Lévi-Strauss, François Cheng, Kristofer M. Schipper, Yuval Noah Harari and many more. The articles



Claude Lévi-Strauss delivering his Race and culture speech at UNESCO, 1971.



The UNESCO Courier (October-December 2021): Stories of Migration

ABOUT THE COURIER

The UNESCO Courier (October-December 2021): Stories of Migration

The UNESCO Courier magazine has changed a great deal over the years, both in content and in form. But it pursues its original mission: to promote UNESCO's ideals, maintain a platform for the dialogue between cultures and provide a forum for international debate.

The relaunch of this historic journal in 2017 represents much more than the resumption of an editorial endeavour: it is a valuable opportunity to renew our commitment to the Courier's founding values.

The UNESCO Courier recently focused on Ocean, youth, migration and illicit trafficking of cultural goods. It also published a special issue on the "futures of education" during the the 41st session of UNESCO's General Conference.

The set of two volumes can be purchased at UNESCO's bookstore and online.

Scan this QR code to purchase:



Link to buy the book

<https://en.dl-servi.com/product/transforming-ideas-complete-set-2-volumes>

Link to subscribe to the Courier

<https://en.unesco.org/courier/subscribe>

represent the *Courier's* important role in cross-cultural dialogue and the exchange and appreciation among world civilizations.

As UNESCO's Director General Audrey Azoulay writes in the preface, "The magazine has been a window to the world, in which writers, artists, scientists, intellectuals, journalists, filmmakers and members of civil society from all cultural backgrounds have expressed their views and shared their perspectives on topics of universal interest. Today, more than ever, we need to make sure that this window stays wide open." She also thanked the People's Republic of China for its

support in the relaunch of the *Courier* and for this publication.

Along the years, the information and insights published in the *Courier* have never lost relevance. In this new anthology, the archive gains fresh brilliance from new perspectives, and still speaks to current society's pressing challenges.

Examples of such nuggets of wisdom are found in abundance within the two volumes. From Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his "Race, History and Culture" article in *Volume I: Thinkers*: "Racial prejudice is at its most intense when it concerns human

groups confined to a territory so cramped and a share of natural resources so meagre that these peoples lack dignity in their own eyes as well as in those of their more powerful neighbors." In *Volume II: Creators*, readers will find an interview with Gabriel García Márquez from 1991, in which he says: "When I was travelling in Africa, I noticed similarities between some forms of popular art there and those of various Caribbean countries. That gave me a clearer understanding of our own cultural situation as well as of the relationship between elements of different cultures generally. Through such insights, you can discover both what is unique

and what is universal in a culture. There is a whole network of links between peoples that they may not necessarily be aware of."

Spanish artist Joan Miro's two famous murals, designed for the UNESCO building in 1955, adorn the publication's covers: "The Wall of the Sun" is shown on *Volume I: Thinkers* and "The Wall of the Moon" on *Volume II: Creators*. In many ancient cultures, the sun and the moon shining together is an auspicious sign for the future. ■

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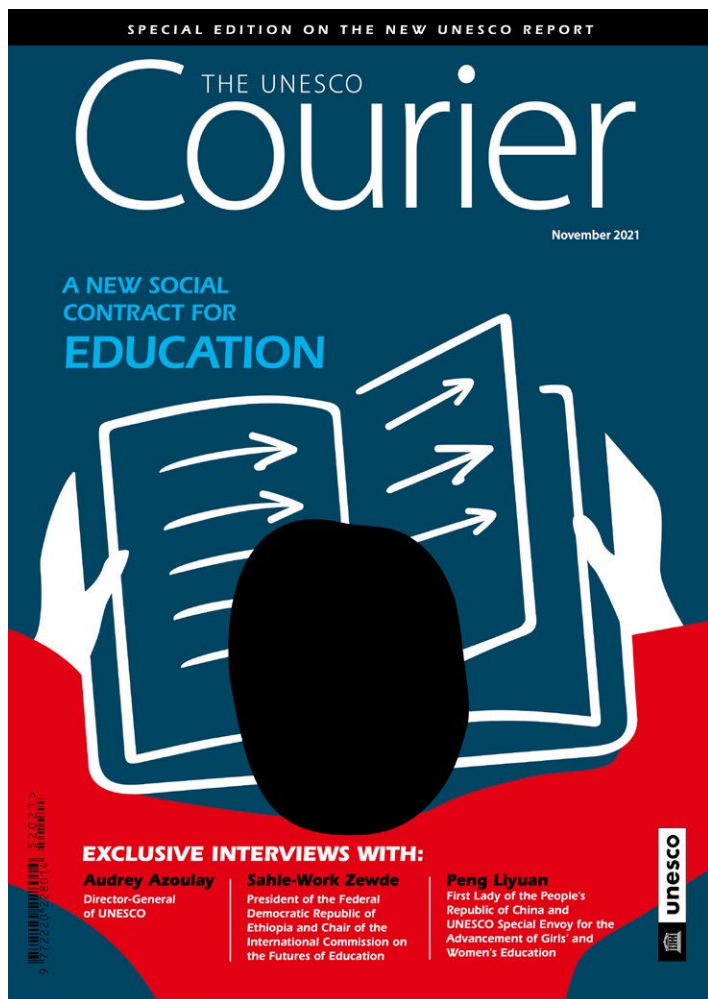
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Courier Education Special



On 10 November 2021, during the 41st session of UNESCO's General Conference, the new global report on education, *Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education*, was launched.

On the same day, *The UNESCO Courier* also launched a special issue on education discussing the proposals presented in the new report. They are complemented by reflections on the future of education by Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO; Peng Liyuan, First Lady of the People's Republic of China and UNESCO Special Envoy for the Advancement of Girls' and Women's Education; and Sahle-Work Zewde, President of Ethiopia and Chair of the International Commission on the Futures of Education.

Sahle-Work Zewde says in her interview with the *Courier*, "Education needs to develop the capabilities of people across the world to engage in dialogue and act together. To be empowered to take collective action, individuals need to learn empathy. Education has the potential to expose everyone everywhere to knowledge, opportunities, and people that they would not

otherwise encounter. A strong commitment to human rights, gender equality and to repairing past injustices will help us create inclusive educational ecosystems that support people in all areas of their lives."

Agnès Bardon, the *Courier's* editor-in-chief, writes in the editorial, "Faced with the rapid changes in our environment, a change of direction is necessary. We need to devote more importance to ecology; to provide students with the critical tools to detect misinformation, prejudices and preconceived ideas; to strengthen teamwork; and to improve the professionalization of teachers."

Faced with global challenges such as growing inequalities, climate change, the rise of digital technologies and the decline of democratic governance, UNESCO has set as its priority to reinvent education.

Bardon writes, "Beyond these imperatives, we must also rethink the multiple interdependencies, the links between generations and between cultures, and our relationship with living beings to establish a new social contract for education." ■

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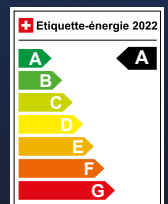
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newSpecial – behind the scenes

Have you ever wondered who is helping put together the magazine? You've met the editorial committee, but what about the people who work on the layout, the design, who read through the articles of the magazine? Well, this is your opportunity to have a look behind the scenes of *newSpecial* magazine.

LISANNE HOPKIN,
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Qu'est l'atelier Schnegg ?

Situé au cœur des Eaux-Vives, l'Atelier Schnegg n'est pas qu'une agence de graphistes, typographes et UI designers. C'est aussi un endroit bienveillant où chacun est encouragé à faire ce qu'il aime, à développer ses compétences et où la communication est la base.

Forts de nombreuses années d'expérience dans les domaines du graphisme institutionnel et de la typographie, nous formons aujourd'hui un collectif pluridisciplinaire composé de directeurs artistiques, typographes,

graphistes, web designers, et architectes d'intérieur, capable d'offrir une large gamme de services, allant de la conception d'identité visuelle à la gestion de publication multilingues en passant par la signalétique et le web design.

L'agence abrite en effet trois entreprises indépendantes, nous sommes bien entourés! Sans compter les apprentis, qui depuis des années, nous permettent sans cesse de redécouvrir notre métier. Quel intérêt de se tuer au travail pour gagner beaucoup d'argent? Ce que nous voulons, c'est prendre le temps pour former nos jeunes, pour apprendre à connaître nos clients, pour faire du bon travail.

Un esprit d'équipe très collaboratif nous anime. Le dialogue et le respect des valeurs mutuelles sont au cœur même de notre façon de travailler.

Premièrement, nous avons Michel Schnegg qui est directeur financier, responsable administratif, coach, spécialiste de la machine à café, et qui ramène surtout du boulot! Il adore son équipe, surtout Chantal qui est exceptionnelle, il ne sait pas ce qu'il ferait sans elle! Il aime le contact avec les gens, c'est ce qui le fait se lever le matin. Chaque journée est différente, composée de rencontres, d'échanges... et d'administratif... Ce qu'il aime surtout, c'est le contact avec les apprentis. Michel forme depuis

une dizaine d'années et il s'est rendu compte que cela l'obligeait à se remettre en question sur ce qu'il sait, ce qu'il fait et pourquoi il le fait.

C'est un point positif de pouvoir intégrer l'évolution de la culture à travers les jeunes que l'on forme. Cet enrichissement réciproque permet d'avancer. Cela donne un sens à son travail. Pouvoir accompagner les jeunes, les voir évoluer et ensuite quitter l'entreprise une fois leur papier obtenu est une sorte d'accomplissement.



Michel est un entrepreneur dans l'âme. Dès la fin de son apprentissage d'électronicien à 21 ans, il a su qu'il allait changer de voie. Sa passion pour le graphisme, il la doit à son père typographe. Elle l'a amené à ouvrir sa première structure en tant qu'autodidacte.

Après deux expériences entrepreneuriales, pendant lesquelles ils ont été jusqu'à 18 employés, ils sont revenus à une plus petite structure pour prendre du temps, ne plus être uniquement absorbés par l'entreprise et surtout former des jeunes. L'Atelier Schnegg+

existe maintenant depuis 12 ans sous cette forme. Maintenant ça évolue, ils s'adaptent et ils profitent des énergies quand elles arrivent. Une belle période est en train de se profiler, ils se réjouissent de voir comment ça va évoluer!

Après nous avons Chantal. Elle est arrivée à l'Atelier Schnegg un peu par «erreur» (elle avait mal compris l'offre d'emploi qui était parue), mais il n'y a pas de hasard dans la vie, et 8 ans et demi plus tard elle est encore là. Elle a évolué au fur et à mesure, et elle est maintenant la directrice artistique/graphiste/secrétaire/rédactrice du bureau. Chantal adore ce côté multi-facettes, qui lui permet de ne jamais s'ennuyer, d'autant plus que les projets sont très variés. Elle sait la confiance que Michel a en elle, et cela lui donne l'élan pour faire de belles choses, elle se réjouit de la chance de faire partie de cette chouette

aventure! Le fait d'être proches des clients lui plaît également beaucoup. Il n'y a rien de mieux que d'avoir les commentaires positifs (ou négatifs) directement et cela permet d'instaurer un climat de confiance et de respect mutuels, c'est agréable pour tout le monde! Chantal aime travailler dans cette petite structure, qui permet d'être proche de tout le monde, autant collègues que clients et son rôle est d'autant plus intéressant dans ce cas de figure, car chacun a sa place et est écouté. Elle est très chanceuse, elle organise son temps un peu comme elle veut et c'est très agréable. Elle peut choisir d'aller voir un client, visiter une expo (ce qu'elle ne fait pas assez malheureusement), feuilleter des livres ou passer du temps à se former sans forcément devoir se justifier.

Chantal est arrivée à l'atelier après un parcours scolaire plutôt

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normal: Maturité artistique, puis diplôme en Communication Visuelle à la HEAD. Elle a également suivi quelques formations de développement web. Se diriger vers un métier artistique a presque été une évidence pour elle. Elle aimait lire et dessiner déjà petite. Sinon, Chantal est assez sportive (elle a fait du hockey pendant environ 15 ans), elle aime les balades, voyager, découvrir de nouvelles choses. Et elle est quelqu'un de très optimiste, très curieuse et parfois un peu impatiente. Elle pense qu'elle est assez agréable à vivre, mais qu'il faudrait demander confirmation à ses collègues!

Ensuite, nous avons Matéo qui est apprenti chez Michel depuis 2018. Après avoir commencé une maturité gymnasiale à Davos en sport-étude, il est brièvement allé au collège de Saussure en musique avant de débiter son apprentissage de 4 ans en tant que graphiste à l'atelier Schnegg+. Il essaie d'apporter au maximum des idées aux projets et de participer quand il en a les capacités et la possibilité. Il apprécie tout spécialement les recherches de logos et de concepts créatifs originaux en tous genres. Matéo aime le fait d'avoir de la liberté pour chercher des techniques de création artistique variées et d'avoir ensuite un

retour de Michel et Chantal sur les résultats. Les échanges avec Sacha, le deuxième apprenti, sont aussi d'une grande richesse pour développer des projets.

Depuis petit, Matéo est passionné de musique et de hockey. Il joue toujours dans une équipe et il ne compte pas arrêter avant un moment il l'espère. Il n'a malheureusement plus le temps de jouer dans un groupe de musique comme dans le passé. Cela fait 4 ans qu'il est à l'Atelier Schnegg et il est ravi de sa progression ainsi que des opportunités qu'il a pu avoir ici. Son objectif après le CFC est de faire une maturité professionnelle qui lui permettra s'il le désire d'aller plus tard à l'université ou dans une haute école.

Et dernièrement à l'Atelier Schnegg, nous avons Sacha. Après 3 ans d'apprentissage de graphiste dual, l'entreprise qui le formait a fermé ses portes. Sacha s'est donc retrouvé en plein-temps à l'école mais la façon d'apprendre, très scolaire ne lui correspondait pas. Il s'est donc démené pour trouver un nouvel employeur mais aucune piste... Matéo, grand sauveur et apprenti de l'Atelier Schnegg étant un ami dans la même volée que Sacha, a parlé de sa situation

à Michel. Quelques jours après ils ont discuté de son cas avec Michel par téléphone et 1 mois plus tard la décision était prise, il serait le second apprenti de l'Atelier Schnegg. Après quelques démarches administratives, le voilà débarqué dans une entreprise accueillante, entouré de personnes motivées et débordant de bonnes idées. Une nouvelle entité s'est d'ailleurs créée, nommée «Matcha» (mélange de Matéo et Sacha). Ils mènent des projets donnés (évidemment supervisés par Chantal et Michel) et le travail en équipe est une grande source de motivation et d'échange surtout entre deux apprentis. Ce que Sacha aime le plus dans son rôle, c'est que le métier de graphiste ouvre des portes de créations, mais aussi, suivant les projets, des portes de connaissances. Il aime découvrir de nouvelles choses et le fait de devoir se renseigner sur un sujet, une thématique, creuser pour trouver de l'inspiration, l'amène toujours vers de nouvelles expériences et donc, de nouvelles choses à apprendre. C'est aussi un métier qui peut s'appliquer dans la vie de tous les jours, une affiche, un logo, un sticker, un produit Migros, un livre, un site internet, une ribambelle de choses visuelles qui nous entourent rentrent dans le cadre

du métier de graphiste et peuvent être analysées et inspirantes.

Sacha est quelqu'un d'assez discret et curieux, il aime faire de nouvelles expériences. Comme pour beaucoup de personnes, la nourriture est une partie importante de sa vie (il parle ici surtout de manger), ses origines italiennes n'y sont sûrement pas pour rien. La musique aussi rythme sa vie, cela lui permet de trouver de la motivation dans les moments où il n'en a pas, du courage quand il en faut et de la bonne humeur à partager.

Outside of Atelier Schnegg



© Lisanne Hopkin

Our first member outside of Atelier Schnegg is Lisanne Hopkin. Her role is editorial assistant intern. There's quite a lot that goes on. She spends a lot of her time reading other people's submissions, editing those, sometimes translating them from French to English, and vice versa. She also writes her own articles. So far, they've been about education, and mental and physical health. She's quite tempted to write about women's safety, or maybe what she likes to call a 'love letter to yourself'. Lisanne really likes the fact that she can write about almost anything, sometimes following the theme of the issue for that month, other times writing about something completely different. She also researches images for articles and sometimes the cover. She'd sum it all up by saying that her role is about refining newSpecial's content and making it the best it can be. Lisanne enjoys the freedom of what she can write about in her role, but what she enjoys the most is actually reading other people's work. She finds it so fascinating! She learns a lot from reading their submissions.

She's learned about Louis Antoine de Bougainville, active bystander training, events that take place in Switzerland, activities people do, or places they visit. She feels like her eyes have been opened up to a completely different world. That's the thing with international organisations; everyone's experienced something, and they all have a story to tell.

Lisanne English and Swiss. She grew up in Switzerland. She did her BA in Drama & Creative Writing at Royal Holloway University of London and graduated in 2020 with her MA in Creative Writing & Publishing from Kingston University London. As you can see, she likes writing. Her family always teases her for giving her (old and unused) characters really twee names, so she doesn't do that anymore. However, she will always write a wholesome story. At university, she was the only person in her class to do this. Growing up, she also spent a lot of her time dancing or being in shows at Simply Theatre. Lisanne is also really grateful to Garry for this opportunity! He's been so lovely and welcoming to her, and she can't thank him enough! He's made her feel like her opinions are invaluable and has made her believe that this is something she could do full-time. At least for a while. She's really enjoyed being a part of the newSpecial team and is really happy to have been able to learn so many things.



© Guilherme Sanches Lira

Our second interviewee part of newSpecial magazine is Guilherme Sanches Lira. In his role as the editorial assistant, he has various responsibilities. Each issue of the magazine includes submissions from regular and other contributors. They usually send the team drafts, ideas, asking questions or inquiring about themes for the upcoming issues. Communicating with all of them, providing guidance and helping the contributor to get to the final stage of their article is an important part of the magazine's relationships with its contributors. Gui then works with the Editor in Chief in the final selection of articles and compiles them ready for a lay out. In this editorial process, he continues to liaise with newSpecial's contributors on missing pieces or other clarifications. He also helps to disseminate the magazine, both the electronic version, via our social media channels and the hard copies. He has written several articles himself for the magazine, which has given him an opportunity to share his thoughts on important issues. Gui enjoys being exposed to international issues and topics that are being discussed in

Geneva and other parts of the world. The magazine not only provides him with the opportunity to use his linguistic skills, but also to engage with different people who come from different walks of life.

Gui is Brazilian and Italian. He has a BA in International Relations, and he is working on his Master of Arts degree in English Linguistics and Communication at the Université de Neuchâtel. He's also trained as a teacher of English as a foreign language from Cambridge University. Gui takes great interest in human communication in all its different forms. He likes travelling, he tends to like going to off-the-beaten track places and discovering new cultures, languages and people.

Now you've met everyone who works on our magazine! Hope you enjoyed getting to know them! ■

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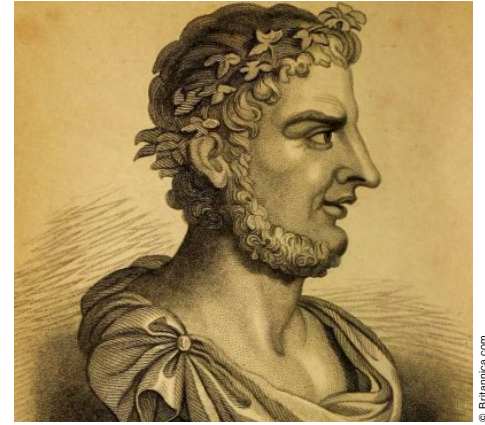
Who will guard over the guardians?



© Alfred de Zayas



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ALFRED DE ZAYAS, UN SOCIETY OF WRITERS

As we surf on the mainstream media, listen to the telejournal, check out the social media, we can witness how fake news evolves into fake history and how politicians and journalists instrumentalize both to concoct fake law. I think that we can say, without fear of contradiction, that there is a veritable war on truth. Surely we are on a slippery slope toward fake democracy – or are we already there?

Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? (Juvenalis, Satires) – who will guard over the guardians? – when the mainstream media no longer performs the function of the watchdog, no longer alerts us to endemic – and punctual – governmental abuses but acts more like echo-chambers of the interests of certain “elites” and transnational corporations... Who will blow the whistle on governmental and private-sector scams? How can we defend our rights when our elected officials, those who have the obligation to uphold the law, are actually in the service of other, more powerful and lucrative interests? What can we do when the executive, legislative and judiciary are progressively corrupted, when institutions like the ICC discontinue investigations into gross criminality by powerful states while prosecuting the little fish, when the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons tampers with the evidence of inspectors and suppresses crucial facts (Douma “report” on Syria), when the OAS is complicit in a coup d’état against an OAS member state (Bolivia), when other supposedly objective

organizations systematically dis-inform the public, disseminate evidence-free news, censor, suppress dissent?

Only we can be the guardians – by reclaiming democracy and our right to effective participation in public affairs, as stipulated in article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We must condemn the politicization and “weaponization” of human rights, especially when human entitlements are instrumentalized to obliterate others. We must also push-back against the Covid-19 phenomenon of a change in our image of the human person, the division of society into right-thinking people and conspiracy-theorists, ostracizing other human beings who have doubts about official truths – e.g. vaccines. Has the virus so radically changed our social behaviour? Have we lost that precious right to be wrong? We should be careful not to fall into the trap of *Homo homini virus est* – man is a virus to other men, because we all share the same human dignity – also those who have false ideas.

Moreover, we should remember that human rights are not in competition with each other, but that human rights constitute a holistic system based on our common human dignity. We know that the United Nations, the Security Council, the General Assembly, ECOSOC, the Human Rights Council are all political. That’s not the problem – it is a factum that everything can be seen as “political” in some way. What is crucial is that everybody be required to play by

the same rules and that there be some kind of monitoring to ensure that the rules are being observed in good faith.

A problem lies in the fact that many diplomats and politicians sitting in public institutions do not really feel committed to human rights, international law or international solidarity – or at least do not consider these values as their priorities, although they give the requisite lip service to them. Another problem lies in the absence of ethics in public institutions, in the double-standards used by politicians and diplomats. Indeed, *quod licet Iovi non licet bovi* – what is permissible for Jupiter (the P5 at the Security Council) is not permissible for the rest of us bovines.

Sure, the world needs a rules-based international order – valid for everybody, not just for the poorer countries. Remarkably, the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken keeps harping on this “rules based” order. But we already have it: the United Nations Charter, which is akin to a world constitution. Everything is already in the Charter. All we have to do it is to apply it in good faith.

It is dismaying to see how many countries ostensibly committed to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, systematically vote in the Human Rights Council to defeat certain mandates that advance transparency and accountability, when they vote against the human right to peace, the right to international solidarity, the right to development. We must denounce those countries that sabotage efforts to adopt a legally binding instrument on corporate social responsibility, flout the prohibition on unilateral coercive measures, use mercenaries to defeat the right of self-determination of peoples, disregard UN decisions and resolutions, including Advisory Opinions of the International Court of Justice.

Powerful States that violate international law with impunity are actually sending a dangerous signal and giving a cynical example to developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. If we in the developed “West” want to be leaders – not only in economic matters, but also in human rights, we must lead by good example. And when we do evil things like the barbaric assault on Iraq in 2003 or the persecution of whistle-blowers like Julian Assange and Edward Snowden, we establish “precedents of permissibility” – which others will surely follow. There lies the curse of evil

deeds – that they continue generating further evils – *Das eben ist der Fluch der bösen Tat, dass sie forzeugend Böses muss gebären*” (Friedrich von Schiller, Piccolomini)

What the international community needs in the twenty-first century is mutual respect and pluralism, international solidarity and multilateralism. And yet, from all sides we experience the pressures of conformism, groupthink and “political correctness”. We must be very vigilant if we do not want to get caught up in a totalitarian witch hunt against “wrongthink”. We ourselves must be both guardians and whistle-blowers. We cannot trust institutions that are financed by corporations and/or have

been penetrated by intelligence services. We cannot rely on media that caters only to the powerful. We must pro-actively build a sustainable world – day by day – based on the United Nations Charter and multilateral action.

We are the guardians. ■

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Teaching and learning Post-COVID-19

The way forward

The term used to describe the way things have changed, including teaching and learning since COVID-19 struck is not one that I particularly like: 'the new normal'.



INEZ RANDOLPH, ACCRA, GHANA

I believe words or better said, our utterances have power to act once they are put out there in the universe therefore, for me, saying 'the new normal' would be me giving power to those words thus, empowering the situation! I miss what we had before; how things were before... In this respect, I prefer to say evolving times or where we find ourselves now. Furthermore, given that I am quite old school I love and miss the 'old normal!'

With the pandemic came virtual teaching and learning to make up for the lack of face-to-face contact. It was surprising to note that we had forgotten that virtual

learning has always existed; its use just amplified. In 1993 with the debut of the first Internet web browser, created by the University of Illinois, online learning began to flourish. The first-ever completely online course was offered in 1984 by the University of Toronto. Slide projectors and television-based classes *have been* in use since the 1950s.

Teaching and learning changed and the digital mode of conducting classes, learning and assessments took over. Interactive and enquiry-based learning were no longer the order of the day and there was not much anyone could do about it. Blended learning and hybrid models were offered. Some



© Inez Randolph

Inez Randolph

schools even offered both and students were confronted with attending both. Nevertheless, some pupils and students were not comfortable interacting and engaging online. In 2020 when I was teaching at that time, I found that there was a discomfort vis-à-vis appearing on camera for some of my students and those who were already quiet in class did not want to participate at all. This new 'big brother' was not one that they particularly liked!

The disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be ignored. Challenges in the way we teach and learn surfaced. I have not conducted formal research into the matter however, I have spoken to several students including mine and discussed the subject at length with teacher-friends. From what I gleaned, mental health became a big problem that we need to tackle moving forward for both parties – students and teachers alike.

The impact of the lockdown and self-isolation had a tremendous effect on mental health and the quality of life for most people especially, pupils, students, teachers and care-givers. A lot of teenagers turned to social media for a way out of the isolation. Long hours were spent reaching out to friends and playing games on the net. The result of this was lack of sleep. Pupils and students from disadvantaged backgrounds

suffered the most. My students described feelings of loneliness, anxiety, depression and negative thoughts. Students who did not have space to exercise felt even worse.

In as much as online teaching and learning provided a solution and opportunities for continuing education, I don't believe it is suitable for everyone. I think ways should be found to make it comfortable for students and to support their diverse learning needs. I believe it is time we went beyond pedagogy in order to create critical-thinkers who will become street-wise. Unfortunately, the real world is out there, not in the class room. Reopening plans should be extended to include policy makers in the community.

In order to figure out the way forward, all stakeholders in the education sector have to come together to assess what is working and build upon it. We do not necessarily have to come up with new ideas but rather improve upon what is already proving successful. Indicators from school censuses and household surveys can be used to conduct further surveys. Data from the latter will eventually serve as guidelines to support implementation, adaptation and learning. Yes, I agree that in some areas we cannot continue what we did before however, sometimes continuity in a different way saves time and we do not have enough of that. Now is when we should make haste to strengthen the foundations in teaching and learning that are strong and are already in place and, solidify that to offer a better education system that works for our children. The education systems that we offer should provide safe school environments that promote hygiene and undertake frequent screening for fevers, coughs and colds. Counselling and health departments in schools should make nutrition and student well-being one of their main focus areas.


Schools have to pay particular attention to early childhood learning education which has suffered tremendously as well as provide the funds and tools for Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) to support vulnerable and underprivileged children. Learning opportunities for students and professional development for teachers should become priority especially, where training in the psychosocial domain is concerned. This can also provide extra emotional support for the students. The systems for standardised testing and assessments should be reviewed to take into account the changes in teaching and learning post-COVID-19. Teachers, I believe, should encourage peer-support and dedicate some time to online exams preparation, support and duration. This, unfortunately has

been quite lacking. Those who have been trained can coach students in order to implement learning interventions to solve the crisis created by the loss of learning.

Parents, if possible, have to try to create a home working environment that facilitates learning with a special attention to space and noise given that the quality of life or lack thereof is a huge determiner in the attitude of pupils and students at school.

Learning about student experiences will in addition help us know how better to help them. It will also determine how to model a delivery style to suit them. I trust that moving forward, strategies in the way we do things in the education sector has to primarily address the needs of the former. ■

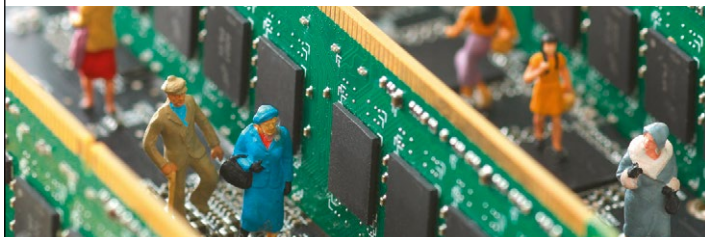
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Chiens de détection olfactive de la COVID-19

Sous l'égide du Professeur Dominique Grandjean, officiant en France, à l'École nationale vétérinaire d'Alfort, une équipe dénommée « Nosaïs-Covid19 », est parvenue à finaliser un protocole de détection Covid prometteur. Plusieurs pays s'intéressent de près à cette expertise.



© Nosaïs

CHRISTIAN DAVID, UNOG¹

Les premiers essais de dépistage de la Covid par des chiens reniflant des prélèvements de sueur axillaire se sont déroulées à l'EnvA (École nationale Vétérinaire d'Alfort), fin avril 2020 et ont conduit à des résultats significatifs.

Depuis début mars 2020, la petite équipe du programme Nosaïs de l'EnvA a tenu bon dans son objectif de tester l'acuité olfactive du chien dans sa possible capacité à détecter la COVID-19.

L'odorat du chien possède 200 à 250 millions de cellules olfactives (5 millions pour l'homme). Cette faculté hors du commun, permet la détection d'explosifs, de stupéfiants, de billets de banque, de personnes ensevelies ou égarées...

Elle est utilisée également pour le dépistage précoce de cancers ou l'alerte de crises pour diabétiques et épileptiques. En Afrique le chien (mais aussi le rat) est utilisé en routine pour le diagnostic de tuberculose (sur expectorats) ou de malaria (sur chaussettes portées 24 heures), maladies infectieuses ou parasitaires.

Ne disposant d'aucune base de référence en la matière, l'équipe s'est demandée si la COVID-19 laissait une signature olfactive spécifique détectable. En effet, les présomptions étaient fortes qu'un virus tel que le SARS-CoV-2 puisse générer des composés organiques volatils. Il s'agissait donc de le démontrer.

Il ne fut pas évident de se lancer ainsi sans moyens, sur une

idée souvent jugée un peu folle... Prélèvements de sueur (liquide biologique non contaminant) axillaire (pour éviter les contaminations passives), sur compresses chirurgicales (pour éviter les coûts). Travail des chiens sur cônes de détection olfactive (toujours pour éviter tout contact chien/prélèvement)...

Durant toutes les études, les chiens de sapeurs-pompiers furent leurs partenaires. Provenant des SDIS de Seine-et-Marne, de Corse du Sud puis et surtout des Yvelines et de l'Oise. Depuis quelques mois et grâce à la volonté du laboratoire CEVA, un autre site de travail a vu le jour à Libourne dans une collaboration avec le CHU de Bordeaux, le SDIS de Gironde et la Gendarmerie Nationale de Dordogne.

Le chien, un vrai
auxiliaire de la santé
humaine!

Dès le début les choses se sont mises en place dans une collaboration quotidienne avec le Liban, puis les Emirats Arabes Unis, et ce sont aujourd'hui 35 pays qui appliquent le programme NOSAÏS-COVID-19, tandis qu'une quinzaine d'autres travaillent sur l'urine, salive ou air expiré.

Cette action représente de surcroît, un bel exemple de « One Health, One Medicine », associant

vétérinaires, médecins et cynotechniciens dans un même travail au profit de la santé humaine. Force est de reconnaître que si ce concept est appliqué et apprécié par les médecins de terrain, il est loin d'être partagé par les décideurs de notre haute administration!

C'est ainsi que dans moult discussions, deux paradigmes puissants nous sont apparus comme quasi impossibles à modifier: des vétérinaires cherchant à œuvrer dans une pandémie humaine, non mais vous plaisantez? des chiens aussi efficaces que des machines oh combien sophistiquées, quelle foutaise!

Cependant la preuve est établie et conforte les positions prises par nos académies vétérinaires et de médecine fin 2020, et plus récemment par l'OMS: ça marche, et même plutôt très bien!

Les publications de preuves de concepts, de données de sensibilité et de spécificité du « test olfactif canin », de résultats de déploiements en test de masse sur le terrain (aéroports, frontières, clusters, maisons de retraite...) affluent de nombreux pays (France, Australie, Liban, Emirats, Brésil, Chili, Finlande, Allemagne, USA, Grande-Bretagne) et impliquent toutes les universités vétérinaires.

Plusieurs pays ont sollicité l'expertise de « Nosaïs » afin de



Deux chiens de l'unité canine de l'ONUG ont été formés à la détection COVID.



développer un protocole similaire dans une finalité opérationnelle de dépistage de masse: l'Argentine et le Chili, qui envisagent un déploiement dans des aéroports, le Brésil, l'Australie ou encore prochainement la Belgique. Les Émirats arabes unis, grâce à d'importants moyens mis en œuvre, déploient actuellement les 20 équipes déjà formées au sein de l'aéroport de Dubaï. Une mise en œuvre à l'arrivée des paquebots de touristes est également envisagée.

Les Emirats organisent tous les 2 mois un symposium d'échanges qui regroupe maintenant 42 pays, tandis que l'OMS a permis que se structurent plusieurs groupes de travail à thèmes.

Quant à la France... nous attendons toujours à la fois une démarche décisionnelle mais, qui sait peut-être aussi, des moyens

dans le cadre d'un déploiement proposé et détaillé en février dernier?

Aujourd'hui les soutiens sont venus de la direction de l'EnvA (qui nous a fourni des locaux dédiés), d'entreprises privées (Royal-Canin, CEVA, Dômes Pharma, VetOne) et de l'OMS.

Les résultats plus que probants du test grandeur nature réalisé avec l'APHP (Assistance Publique - Hôpitaux de Paris) sous l'égide de la Région Ile de France (sensibilité/spécificité moyenne du test olfactif canin à 97/91p1000, et pour les asymptomatiques à 100/94p100), tout à fait comparables aux résultats du test PCR nasopharyngé, vont peut-être faire réfléchir et infléchir certains réfractaires?

En évaluation de coût induits, un test canin revient à environ 1

euro (75 fois moins qu'un PCR), et dans notre mode de travail sur prélèvement de sueur un chien peut tester environ 150 prélèvements par jour. Pouvoir passer à une détection sur personnes «en files» permettrait sans doute de multiplier ce chiffre par 10. Mais pour ce faire il faut une volonté étatique, ne serait-ce que pour faciliter l'accès aux prélèvements (aujourd'hui il est obligatoire de passer par un protocole de recherche piloté par un CHU et disposant d'un accord d'une Commission de Protection des Personnes, entre autres).

Nous travaillons depuis le mois de septembre 2021 sur une formation des chiens faisant appel à un «leurre» produit par l'Institut Pasteur de Paris (surnageant de cultures cellulaires virales inactivées vs surnageants de culture cellulaire non contaminée) avec succès, puisque grâce à ce leurre

les chiens peuvent aussi dépister le virus sur masques portés.

L'avenir? L'espoir d'un déploiement intelligent, le travail qui débute avec Handi'Chiens pour former un dépistage de la COVID-19, les chiens d'aide aux personnes à mobilité réduite positionnés en EPHAD, l'implication souhaitable de toutes les administrations disposant de chiens de détection olfactive... Et peut-être enfin une nouvelle perception du chien dans nos sociétés, devenu un vrai auxiliaire de la santé humaine! ■

¹ Article rédigé avec le concours de Dominique Grandjean, Clothilde Julien, Capucine Gallet, Marc Blondot, Vinciane Roger (EnvA)

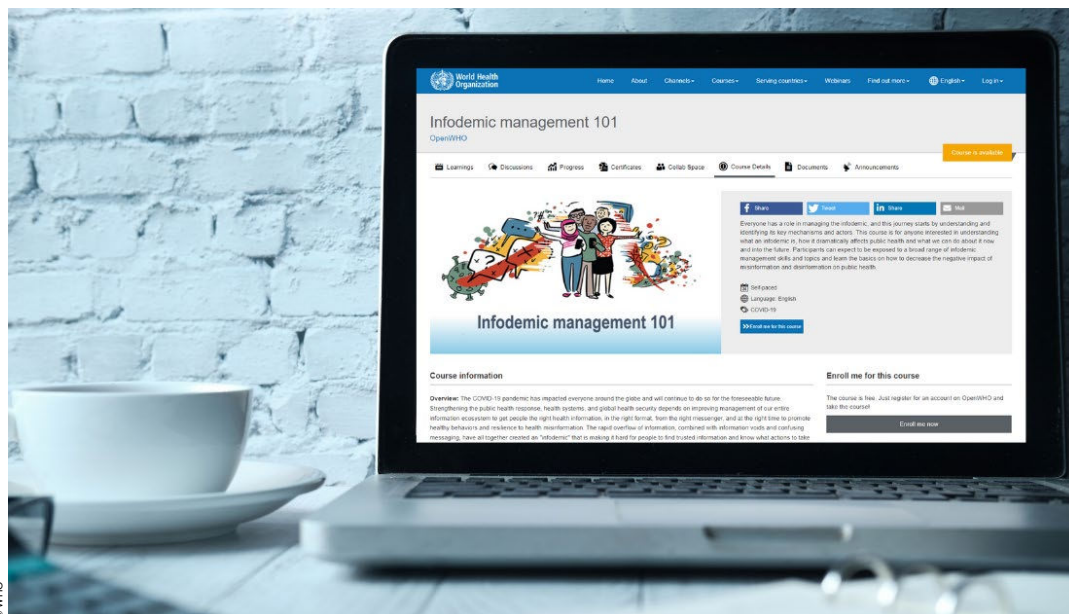
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Empowering the global community with open-access learning: Marking two years of pandemic learning response on OpenWHO.org



HEINI UTUNEN, MELISSA ATTIAS AND RYAN CROWDER, WHO

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a significant challenge to learning at a time when transferring lifesaving knowledge to audiences across the world is critical. The World Health Organization (WHO) has met this challenge over the past two years, advancing digital learning and course production to improve the global response to the pandemic and save lives.

With 6 million course enrolments and more than 3 million certificates awarded since its launch in 2017, WHO's [OpenWHO.org](https://openwho.org) platform has seen an enormous increase in learning activity during the pandemic. This has enabled WHO and key partners to transfer guidance and knowledge to more frontline responders than

ever before, furthering WHO's mission to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable.

"Everyone deserves access to knowledge to protect their health and the health of their loved ones," said Dr Michael Ryan, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme. "Providing open-access online learning is an integral part of capacitating countries and communities to prepare for and respond effectively to health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic."

To address the evolving learning needs, OpenWHO has focused on key thematic areas to shape our course production strategy. In 2020, our core focus was on providing information for mass

audiences and health workers so they could protect themselves and others, including basic information about COVID-19 and infection prevention and control.

In 2021, OpenWHO prioritized learning support for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, providing essential information for health workers and national planning. This year, we will work to expand OpenWHO support to countries by providing localized learning based on WHO guidelines and developing additional channels for country-originated learning content.

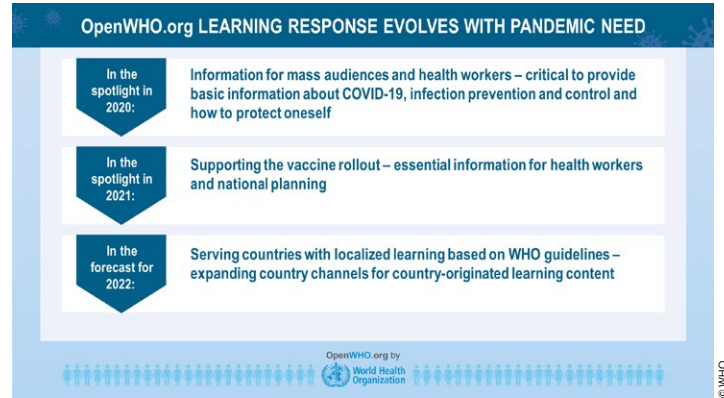
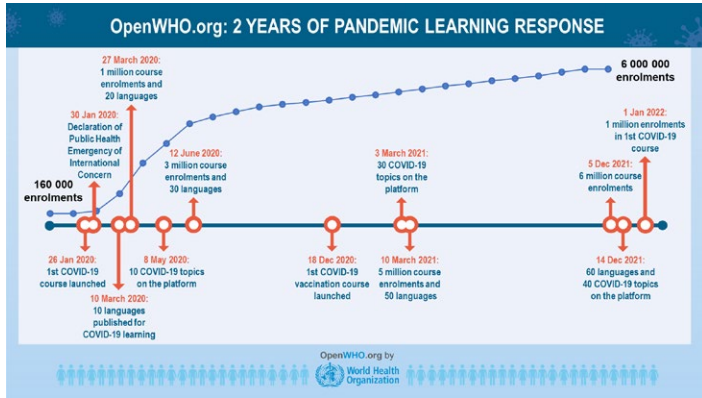
At the centre of this work, OpenWHO continuously seeks to advance equity in the pandemic learning response to ensure everyone across the globe has access to courses and learning

materials. To achieve this, OpenWHO has invested in the following strategic priorities:

Reaching underserved groups

The COVID-19 pandemic brought an exponential surge of learners to OpenWHO and expanded public health learning to previously underrepresented groups. Specifically, the participation of women, learners ages 70 and older, and learners younger than 20 has significantly increased over the past two years and continues to grow as new courses and translations are added.

This growth is not limited to numbers of learners, as increased demand for learning during the pandemic has also led to increased learner commitment. OpenWHO usage statistics have shown that learners are now more



likely to complete courses than prior to the pandemic, highlighting increased motivation across all learner groups.

Serving the global community

Online learning participation has also shifted geographically during the pandemic as people in low- and middle-income countries seek knowledge to protect themselves from COVID-19.

Learners from low- and middle-income countries make up nearly three-quarters of OpenWHO users, compared to half before the pandemic, further strengthening global equity. This has been driven by surging demand in middle-income countries affected by COVID-19.

When population is taken into consideration, small island states bring the highest proportion of learners per population to OpenWHO. Among the top 20

countries, territories and areas per capita, a total of 16 are small island states. Online delivery contributes to equity by making it possible for remote locations to participate in learning.

Translating for impact

Localization of content into the mother tongues of affected populations is essential to learning impact, with proven benefits for learning motivation and retention. Recognizing this, OpenWHO translates COVID-19 courses into as many languages as possible and continuously seeks to expand translations for existing courses.

To maximize impact, priority is given to languages spoken by vulnerable or underserved populations, learners located in low- and middle-income countries, and learners with special needs, as well as those languages most-spoken worldwide. Currently,

OpenWHO offers courses in 60 languages, with more than 11 million words translated in service of global learners.

Prioritizing access to knowledge

OpenWHO survey findings confirm that the top perceived challenges to accessing learning are having time available to learn and the cost of enrolment, with women more likely to identify these barriers than men. To overcome these challenges to equity, OpenWHO courses have remained free of charge and self-paced so that anyone interested can complete courses at their convenience – all at once or across several sessions – and without any cost burden.

Issues with access can also extend to lack of reliable digital technologies and infrastructure. Survey results in OpenWHO vaccine courses confirm these challenges, identifying internet connection

and system/IT-related issues as the top barriers to course completion. Internet connectivity was found to be a particular challenge for learners in the Global South.

To address these difficulties, OpenWHO prioritizes multi-use formats that enable materials to be adapted to local contexts and offline demands. These formats produce a multiplier effect that extends access to additional audiences beyond the OpenWHO platform, further strengthening the local response in remote and sparsely populated regions.

As we enter our third year of the pandemic, **OpenWHO.org** will continue to expand its learning offerings with a focus on supporting equitable access to essential knowledge for health emergencies in pursuit of health for all. ■

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Being grateful despite finding oneself unexpectedly in the midst of disaster zone

Like most international staff working in Geneva, many of us have not seen our loved ones for about two years due to COVID-19 pandemic.



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GEMMA VESTAL, WHO

There were many considerations, such as fear of going anywhere on a long-haul flight without having had the set of vaccines, long quarantine requirements which would eat up one's annual leave days, flight schedules that got frequently changed by the airline companies, etc. By May 2021, I've had my first and second COVID-19 vaccine doses and WHO had also implemented a policy where staff members could exceptionally telework for a maximum of 90 days outside of the duty station. I thought this was a great opportunity to visit my 82 year-old mother who had retired back in Bohol, Philippines after working many decades in the United States. So, I got my flight from Geneva to Manila for mid-November 2021.

Oh, the joys of long-haul travel in the time of COVID-19. I wore a face mask for a straight 36

hours. I wore a face mask from the moment I hopped on an Uber cab in Geneva on my way to the airport (with a change of masks every 4 to 6 hours) until I got to my quarantine hotel room in Manila, Philippines. Although I never had bouts of claustrophobia in the past, during those 36 hours, I had feelings of shortness of breath, anxiety, and the urgent need to jump off the plane to breathe some fresh air. I seriously yearned for some sedating medications such as Xanax or Valium but I unfortunately hadn't foreseen such situation. Had the reason for the flight not been to visit my Mother, I would have headed back to Geneva when one of the flight legs landed in Amsterdam. After meditating and praying, I soldiered on.

My arrival in Manila was before the Omicron variant was identified, so my hotel quarantine was only five days and I was released on day six after my PCR test turned out negative.¹ I eventually got to the province of Bohol, an island province, located in the central Visayas. I was so happy to see my Mother and many relatives still living in the island. Things were relatively uneventful. Working Geneva hours, which meant working from 4pm to midnight Philippine time was perfect as it gave me time to assist my Mother and visit friends and relatives during the morning hours before the noon-day heat of the sun. We had electricity, running water, and a 5G internet connection. Holding Zoom or Team meetings with Geneva colleagues and other partners was a breeze. I did not feel the distance. However, by 15 December 2021, we got warnings to prepare for a major storm that was expected to make land fall the following day. We were warned that electricity would be intentionally cut off



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before the landfall to prevent electrocutions from downed power lines. With this, running water and internet would also not work. I tried to inform my Geneva HQ colleagues about the potential disruption with my work.

I woke up the morning of 16 December and the skies just looked ominously dark. Bohol normally gets spared the brunt of most typhoons that hit the Philippines because as it is centrally located, the other islands surrounding it serve as buffers. So, our “preparations” consisted of ensuring that all windows and doors were bolted shut, pets were inside, any loose things outside were tied down or placed in the shed, flashlights were fully charged with extra pairs of batteries.

The storms of our lives. At around 4pm on 16 December, the storm made landfall on the island. And for 12 relentless hours strong rains and howling winds beat our island. There were

five of us in the house, including my Mother, and we all huddled in apprehension in the pitch-black living room wondering when the storm would finish passing through. Even our normally feisty dog was shivering in fear. My Mother prayed all mysteries of the rosary, several times. We could not hear each other even when we yelled because of the rain and howling wind. However, we could hear things falling loudly on the roof and the sides of the house. Our internet and phones were no longer working so we could not check on anyone. During storms like this, it is too dangerous to be outside due to falling trees and flying parts and pieces of houses. One could easily get decapitated by a flying stainless steel corrugated roof. Therefore, all we could do was stay indoors and hope that our neighbors and loved ones survived the storm and that no one got injured. At some point, we noticed that the living room and kitchen floors were flooded with water. We could not tell if it came from a

leak in the roof or elsewhere. We scrambled to find old towels and clothes to dry up the floor so that no one would slip and fall, especially my elderly Mother.

By 5am the following day, the wind had died down and all that was left was some drizzle. Thankful to survive unscathed, I got out of the house to breathe some fresh air and to survey the damage. Most trees surrounding our house have fallen. When I got out of our property and into the road, I saw neighbors and we warmly greeted each other. By word of mouth, everybody asked about how everyone was doing. This was how we got an informal headcount of the 300 or so families in our barangay. No one died or got injured in our barangay.² Then later we found out that no one died in the municipality of Cortes.³

On days 1 and 2, post super-typhoon, neighbors were still manually cleaning the one

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street out of our neighborhood which connected us to the national highway. The clean up was slow going because fallen trees and electricity poles covered the street. We could not borrow a chainsaw as there was only one person who owned one and we had to wait our turn. Therefore, we used steel bolos with our bare hands to cut tree branches and it was painfully slow going. On Sunday, Day 3 post super-typhoon, with two relatives, I drove around Bohol to check on other relatives and to see if they survived or if they needed help. This was when I witnessed the utter devastation that super-typhoon Odette, a signal number 5 storm, brought on the island. From conversations with long-time island residents, everyone said that this has been the worst typhoon they have experienced in their lives. Coconut trees got split in two like toothpicks. Centuries old trees got uprooted. Electricity poles toppled over homes, buildings, and fences. Some poorly built houses lost roofs and windows. The whole island had no electricity, no running water, and no internet connection. Cell phone services also did not work. The coastal road around Bohol, which is a national highway, was deemed “passable” but it really was just barely passable as cars had to navigate a labyrinth of debris, fallen trees, and electricity poles. There were long lines for gasoline, like a kilometer long. As well, there were also long lines for drinking water. And we had to eat what we could find along the road, which was mostly ripe bananas and some canned food, because not a single restaurant was open due to lack of electricity and running water. The whole

experience was surreal. I thought that this must be how it feels when one is in a war zone. Except that there was no human enemy. The closest I’ve ever been to a catastrophe like this was the California earthquake in 1989 but buildings stayed erect and only some highways collapsed, and a part of the San Francisco Bay Bridge fell off. But the magnitude of the devastation after the typhoon in Bohol was so much worse compared to what I saw and experienced in California in 1989.

For the next few days, I had no way of informing work colleagues why I was missing important meetings. I was feeling bad about being a “no show” so to speak, which added to my distress. And in those few weeks, cash was king. No transaction could be done with a credit card or ATM. None. We all had to transact with cash. Therefore, there were long lines in the banks. And one can only withdraw, in limited amounts, from a bank branch where one had an account in because everything was done on paper.

Post-script, 16 January 2022. It’s been one whole month since super-typhoon Odette devastated the island province of Bohol. Some help had arrived from neighboring islands and from the central government. Certain parts of Bohol have electricity and running water. For example, our houses in Tagbilaran City have electricity every other day which allows us to pump water from the well and fill our water tanks so we can have running water. And internet is available on the days that we have electricity. But the houses in Cortes and

Guindulman still have no electricity and running water. And both houses have damages that need urgent attention. We continue to manage with a small generator that runs for four hours at night and allows us to charge ours and our neighbors’ cell phones. Around us, neighbors are recovering and rebuilding. There are no longer lines for gasoline and drinking water. Once again, one can find fruits and vegetables in the markets, albeit shipped from neighboring islands. Meat and fish are also available again. So, we are no longer eating canned foods. After that initial week of no communication to the outside world, I have since been able to continue to telework, finish my year-end deliverables, and join important work meetings because the owner of a large wedding banquet hall in Tagbilaran City brilliantly turned the place into a “coworking space” for digital nomads where for 1 USD per hour, we could charge our phones and laptops and connect to the internet. This had been the life-saver for me, otherwise, I would have had to let my Mother deal with all the repairs and head back to Geneva.

Conclusions. I have asked myself what I have learned from this and what I am most thankful for. I have learned first-hand that global warming is making storms and typhoons more severe and disastrous. I have seen the value of having close relations with neighbors as they are central to one’s survival in times of need. I’ve now seen how the local government units mobilized their people and resources in order to evacuate and help those who were the most vulnerable. I am thankful for the WHO policy that allows teleworking from outside the duty station. And I am so thankful that I happened to be in Bohol with my Mother when the super-typhoon struck. It would have been so difficult otherwise considering that we could not get word out to the outside world that we were fine until the 6th day after the calamity. I am thankful that there were not too many injuries and death given the magnitude of the calamity. For all these, I am deeply grateful. ■

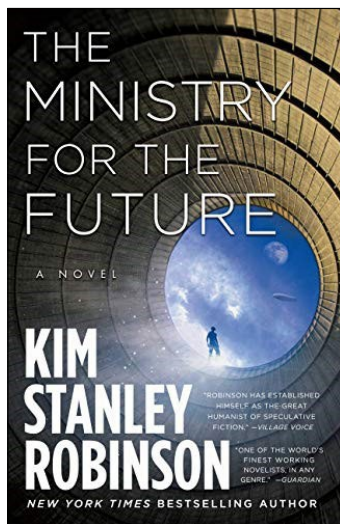
1 Now, as I am writing this, 9 Jan 2022, the quarantine is 14 days and flights from red zone countries, like Switzerland, are not allowed.

2 The smallest grouping of people in a municipality, which is headed by a Barangay Captain.

3 Days later, it was determined that over 400 people died in the island of Bohol. Those who died were especially in places that were along the coastal areas.

Book review

The Ministry for the Future, by Kim Stanley Robinson¹ is a powerful, compelling insight into the future that awaits us, if humankind continues to burn fossil fuels at current rates of consumption.



PHILLIPPA BIGGS, ITU

Skillfully weaving narrative with economic and political insights, this bestselling book introduces multiple narrators and expert testimonies. It follows the story of Mary Murphy, a former foreign minister of Ireland, who heads up a UN agency tasked with implementing the Paris Agreement and tackling climate change. Initially engaged in advocacy, funding and project implementation (the short chapters describing her team's meetings may ring true with many of us), Mary quickly realizes that the urgency and severity of the climate crisis demand urgent action – for real – rather than just treaties, agreements and words. Her agency may or may not have a 'black ops wing', but in the meantime, a group of shadowy climate terrorists, the 'Children of Kali', are taking radical action to blow up airplanes and transport ships and scare people out of flying.

The tragic consequences of climate change are illustrated through a series of anything but 'natural' disasters – a deadly heat-wave in India which kills 20 million people in one week, droughts, flashflooding in Los Angeles, a global tsunami of refugees and displaced people migrating to escape the deadly consequences of climate change. Sea level rises are forecast of up to 10 metres, wiping out the vast majority of the world's beaches, as well as a fair few of our major cities.

And yet, curiously, despite describing impending chaos, the book manages to introduce optimistic elements of the courageous men and women

fighting desperately to avert global catastrophe. This is a future where the UN has real teeth to enforce some of its agreements, as well as the urgent need – and ability – to innovate new systems, including a consumer-empowered social media network, with an associated 'carbon coin'. Civil servants will recognize Robinson's descriptions of international multi-stakeholder negotiations and team dynamics. But he also explores the realpolitik of international relations, which changes are needed and how to bring this about.

This book is best understood as a series of fascinating insights from a very well-read, intelligent and concerned author, describing policy trade-offs, international development and scientific, ecological work. It explores climate issues, economic concepts and intergenerational justice, as well as a systems theory approach to some of our most famous and well-known institutions. It deals with issues such as what difference an individual can in fact make, up against well-entrenched systems, as well as moral dilemmas (e.g. to what extent can criminal action be justified by the benefits to future generations).

You will certainly learn a lot from this book! But all of it written in a fun and informative way. *The Ministry for the Future* is purportedly one of Barack Obama's favourite books, while Extra Klein of Vox magazine urges that, 'if policy-makers and citizens everywhere could read just one book this year', *Ministry for the Future*

should be that book. Hopefully, you might consider this book worth some of your time too. A fascinating book, with some very important messages for us all. ■

¹ Winner of the Hugo, Nebula & Locus book Awards and named a 'Hero of the Environment' by Time magazine

Spread universal values in the attraction market

an intern's experience in the UN Geneva social media team



Meizhi LANG

MEIZHI LANG, INTERN FROM INFORMATION SERVICE, UNOGE

I attend an event at the Palais des Nations. I take photos, write down quotes of the speakers. I make posters on my computer, draft one paragraph for Twitter. Then I add some emojis to make the text more attractive. I put the materials on our team agenda. A few hours later, the tweet is posted. This is the regular content production process for me, an intern in the @UNGeneva social media team.

From follower to the content maker
Growing up in a digital age where Internet has changed the way the world communicates, I depend on social media not only to contact my kith and kin, but also to keep myself informed.

I still remember when preparing for this internship interview, one of the first things I did – almost subconsciously – was to open Twitter and Instagram @UNGeneva to gather the latest information about this international organization.

Shortly after my arrival at the office, I was given the task of contributing to its social media platforms, starting with French Twitter and then English Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.

In the eye of the information storm
UN communication system is so large that sometimes the information it provides could be overwhelming. Each week, communication departments from different international organizations will share with us their promotional materials for different campaigns. In addition, @UNGeneva plays an essential role in covering news that happens inside the Palais, whether it is Afghanistan High-Level Event or a peacock opening its feathers.

Exposed to large amounts of information, I felt like standing in the eye of an information storm at the beginning: while the dizzy information around me spun fast, there was an indescribable quiet in the centre.

I was wondering how UN's campaigns that we launched could influence those 17 million followers. Of course, fixed indicators (such as the number of reads, likes, comments, follower growth rate) have proved that @UNGeneva does reach more and more audiences. And its performance has achieved positive results: it remains one of the top 5 biggest social media presences in Geneva and won The Geneva Engage Awards second time in a row in 2021. But behind these statistics and awards, how can we measure the deep influence of our posts on every follower? For the "engaged" followers, how can they avoid clicktivism and make sure what they learnt will guide his or her future action?

The impact might be subtle,
but it exists

One colleague said if one works for the UN, sometimes it takes years for him to see the feedback of his work. I was lucky enough to see the feedback during my internship.

In September, one of my friends who is crazy about Korean K-Pop stars (like many of my generation do) told me that it seemed unreal that band BTS filmed a song video inside the United Nations, and thanks to this post, she, for the first time in her life, got to know the existence of the United Nations General Assembly. In fact, the tweet of @UNGeneva informing BTS's visit to the UNGA and show their support to the global goals has been retweeted 19.5k times and received more than 61.7k likes in 2021, and the account gained large amounts of their fans as new followers.

In November, I interviewed some students from Erasmus University Rotterdam. They were the first student group to visit Palais des Nations since the onset of the pandemic. After the visit, several students said in the interview that this experience has changed their perspective on the UN. I saw later that they posted on Instagram their photos at the Palais and their thoughts. I was encouraged by the fact that more people might change



Students were listening to the presentation about the UN given by the UNIS colleague inside the Palais des Nations.

their perspective on the UN as well, or become curious about it, or become inspired, after watching the posts of these students.

Receiving positive feedback constantly, I start understanding the role of social media in the UN's communication strategy. In the end, individuals might still not be familiar with a certain conference or certain report, but they will have awareness of the issues and priorities of the UN thanks to those creative campaigns or the action of sharing. The impact remains subtle, but it exists, so it's always worth the effort.

Social media can be good

Amounts of studies showed that social media can be dangerous: they are harmful to mental health of adolescents; they are the hotbed of fake news; algorithms create information cocoons that accelerate bias among people; platforms destroy users' attention and steal personal information.

Therefore, I tried to quit (obviously failed) social media addiction. Yet fate led me into the social media team inside the UN system.

Five months later, I could draw the conclusion that social media can be good if we use it correctly. Maybe the online platform has a good deal of pitfalls, but it is undeniable that it remains a powerful tool to reach the audience. So instead of abandoning this attraction market, why don't we learn to adapt to it, to compete with other influencers, and use this powerful tool to spread UN's values and priorities as widely as possible?

That is the moment when I realized that my work is not just about writing 140 words or making 30-second videos, I am spreading universal values as every communicator inside the UN does. ■



The tweet announcing BTS Band's visit to the UNGA became the most successful post of @UNGeneva in 2021.



I created a video on Instagram @UNGeneva to announce the first student group to visit the Palais des Nations since the onset of the pandemic.

Developing countries and the shaping of the international digital agenda

Cyber knows no borders. This is known for a fact. However, the shaping of the incipient international order in relation to digital issues seems to be concentrated in some parts of the globe, namely the northern hemisphere.



CHRISTIAN PAULETTO*

There are obvious reasons for this, considering that most large digital companies are located in that part of the world and most markets for digital technologies as well, with the exception of one developing country, China. Developing countries are struggling with other, more vital priorities and are often lacking the capacities to fully engage in international processes devoted to digital norms and order. However, similar to global health issues, the climate, or taxation of global companies, most digital issues can efficiently be resolved only if a sizeable part of the world engages, in addition to the

main players. It is essential too that the incipient digital order reflects the interests, values and approaches of all regions and cultures in order to be viable in the long run and to avoid future tensions and frictions.

A number of avenues are already available to developing countries for engaging in the shaping of the digital agenda, but most of them are underutilized. For example, two international conventions on key cyber issues – the conventions on personal data protection and on cyber crime – have been concluded under the auspices of the Council of Europe and are open

to all states, including from other continents. The “Convention 108” on data protection has been successful in attracting developing countries among its membership, with Argentina, Cabo Verde, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, and Uruguay being full members and some others closely cooperating with the organization. The Convention was recently modernized and it remains to be seen how many developing countries will adhere to the new treaty. The Convention on Cyber crime was even more successful and was ratified for example by Chile, Colombia, Ghana, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Tonga.

Yet, the two conventions remain quite far from attracting a universal participation. This situation is counterintuitive considering that no country is immune to intrusion into the privacy of citizens or to cyber crime, either as a target or a basis for unlawful or criminal activities.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) too has a number of instruments on digital issues which are open to participation by non-member countries, and are non legally binding. OECD instruments cover issues such as the protection of privacy, encryption, information

security, and consumer protection in e-commerce. Yet, similar to the Council of Europe, participation by non-OECD countries remains in fact limited.

Regional cooperation fora are privileged frameworks to develop and implement principles and rules that best fit the specific needs in particular of developing countries. Looking at the main developing regions – Africa, Asia and Latin America – it seems that the issues at stake have not yet been tackled as vigorously as in Western regional organizations. On the African continent, the 2014 African Union *Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection*, but to date only five ratifications were deposited out of fifteen needed for entry into force, and this instrument seems quite dated already. The 2010 *Supplementary Act on Personal Data Protection within ECOWAS*, features many common principles with modern data protection frameworks, certainly more so than the African Union’s Convention. In spite of these valuable efforts, a lot could still be done in terms of geographical and topical coverage of digital legal instruments on the continent.

On the Asian continent most digital discussions take place in the context of APEC, which does not encompass all Asian countries and are not legally binding.

The League of Arab States as well is active in this field, for example with its 2010 *Arab Convention on Combating Information Technology Offences*.

Thanks to the OAS (Organization of American States), the American continent is more advanced, also to the extent that it encompasses all developing countries of the continent. The scope of cooperation within OAS is broader than on the two other continents, including for example cyber defense.

Cooperation also exists a bilateral level, including between developing and developed countries or among developing countries. India for example has (non binding) agreements with some Western countries including on cyber defense. Another recent example is the April 2021 Digital Cooperation between China and the Arab League.

From the aforementioned examples it turns out that very much remains

idle and that there is a large scope for the United Nations to intensify its work, if it so wants. To date, most UN agencies have digital programs in their respective fields of expertise. But unavoidably, given that developed countries are so much more advanced with their digital strategies and agendas, they also are the more active ones in UN fora. Whether under the OHCHR with the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy, or under the General Assembly with the “Group of governmental experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, developed countries have far more resources and skills to contribute to the work. The whole system can only benefit from more inputs from all regions of the world, in order to be better aware of specific interests, challenges and opportunities. It is thus in the best interest of all states to undertake targeted efforts to further build the capabilities of developing countries in relation to the international digital agenda.

Developing countries are in general lagging behind in their participation to the shaping of the global cyber agenda. Though there are

some understandable reasons for their lack of integration in these international processes, this is neither desirable nor fair. Some fora do indeed open ample possibilities for developing countries to participate, for example in the context of the Council of Europe, and should enhance incentives for developing countries to do so. More international cooperation aiming at increasing the capabilities of developing countries in respect to their participation in these debates should be considered at multilateral and bilateral levels. Admittedly, the developing world has other more vital priorities for their people. But precisely, a better engagement in digital issues and a more robust digital framework would in the longer run help tackle more effectively those vital priorities. Health issues, the food and agriculture agenda, education including in remote areas, response to global environmental challenges, and many other such vital policy areas would benefit from a better integration of developing in the digital age. And make the world a better place, everywhere. ■

* Christian Pauletto is Associate Professor at IUG, and was former Chief negotiator for Switzerland for Trade in services and electronic commerce.

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Quantifier, analyser et prévoir à l'ère des big data

Le développement de la numérisation au cours des cinquante dernières années a conduit à une situation dans laquelle un nombre croissant de données sont disponibles pour la compréhension des phénomènes sociaux ou économiques. Administrations publiques, organisations internationales et entreprises privées utilisent régulièrement ces données pour s'informer, analyser et planifier. Cependant, certains écueils existent. Comment utiliser ces nouvelles sources pour documenter les phénomènes sociaux? Comment éviter les problèmes de qualité parfois insuffisante des big data?

PHILIPPE WANNER¹

Une double révolution a eu lieu en sciences sociales, et plus généralement dans la documentation et la prévision des phénomènes sociaux. D'une part, l'informatisation dans la deuxième moitié du 20^e siècle a rendu disponible, à un large public, un nombre important de données d'enquêtes, d'états civils ou de recensements harmonisés. L'IPUMS², un institut américain, met par exemple à disposition des recensements de plus de 100 pays sur une période allant de 1790 à aujourd'hui, représentant deux milliards d'enregistrements individuels. Ces données, et pouvoir y accéder, sont un atout important pour les universitaires, les organisations gouvernementales ou non gouvernementales et les entreprises. Elles permettent de mieux comprendre et documenter les changements sociétaux et d'élaborer le cas échéant des politiques adaptées.

D'autre part, la numérisation croissante, dans tous les secteurs d'activité, conduit à l'enregistrement quasi systématique des faits de notre quotidien: nos interactions sur les réseaux sociaux, des informations sur nos paiements par carte bancaire, sur

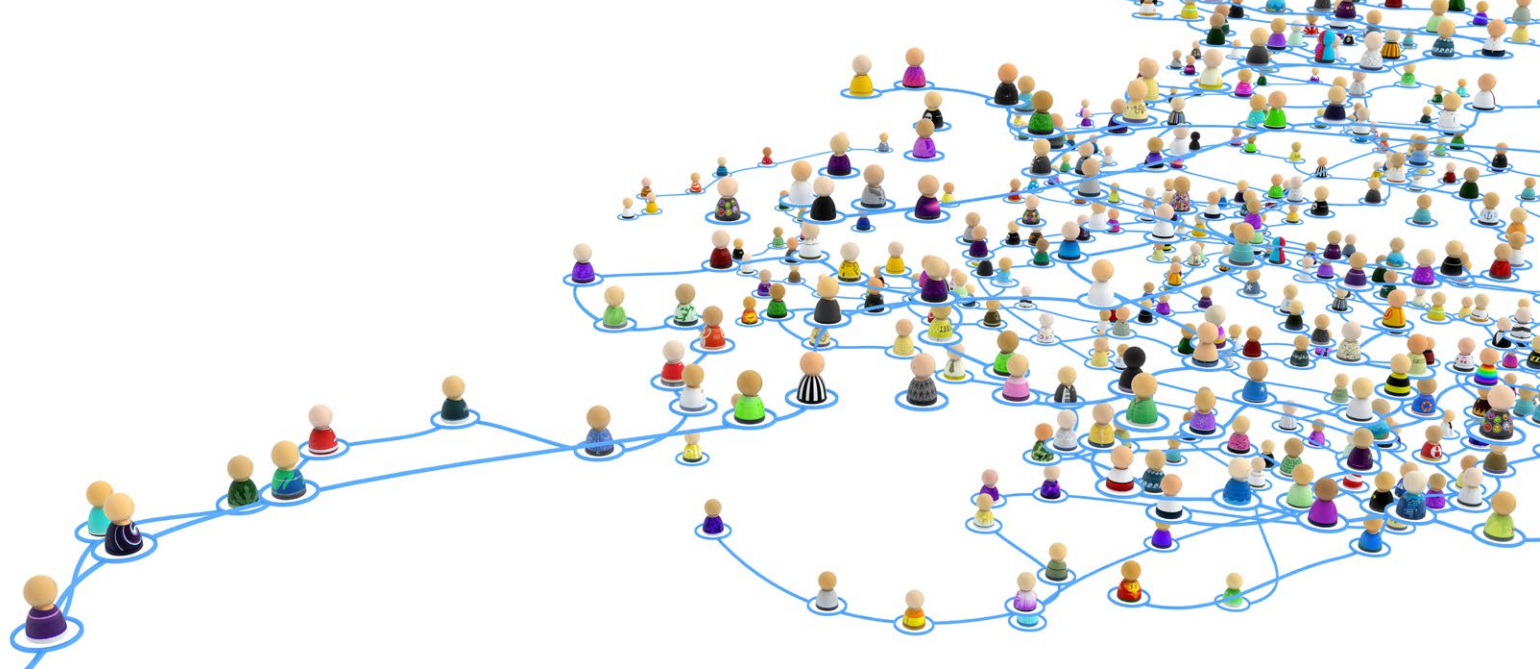
l'utilisation de nos cartes de fidélité ou sur nos déplacements sont recueillies et stockées sous forme numérique, par différents acteurs publics ou privés. Une fois anonymisées, ces données peuvent aussi, dans une certaine mesure, servir de plateforme à la documentation de phénomènes sociétaux.

Les big data: pour quoi faire?

Au rang des premiers développements issus de la numérisation massive, il convient de citer la *Digital Disease Detection* (DDD). Ce mode opératoire de détection des maladies repose sur le recours à différentes métadonnées pour suivre et contrôler des épidémies. Par exemple, l'identification de mots-clés sur les réseaux sociaux (notamment Twitter) ou sur les moteurs de recherche fournit une base intéressante pour suivre l'intérêt du public ou les échanges concernant des maladies infectieuses. La DDD est utilisée à large échelle dès 2009 dans le contexte de l'épidémie de grippe H1N1, et s'est renforcée par la suite, notamment dans la lutte contre l'épidémie d'Ebola. Bien que parfois remise en question en raison de ses problèmes de calibrage, qui génèrent des imprécisions, cette approche repose sur

une information rapidement disponible et en libre accès: la DDD a profondément modifié la surveillance de certaines maladies. En intégrant des données du big data, elle complète les suivis épidémiologiques classiques qui reposent sur les observations et déclarations des médecins et nécessitent plus de moyens et de temps pour être mis en œuvre. Loin de remplacer donc les approches traditionnelles, la DDD permet de compléter la connaissance d'un phénomène médical, ce qui permet d'agir plus efficacement en cas d'épidémie.

Dans d'autres domaines, comme la planification des transports, les big data ont généré une masse d'informations qui étaient très rares dans le passé. Par exemple, il n'y a pas si longtemps, la mesure du trafic routier était effectuée soit manuellement par des agent-es posté-es au bord des routes qui dénombraient le nombre de voitures, soit à l'aide de boucles de comptage placées sur le bitume, dans un nombre limité d'endroits et à des coûts élevés. Aujourd'hui, la géolocalisation GPS ou les données des opérateurs téléphoniques permettent une mesure des flux de trafic à un coût moindre et



en temps réel. Le recours à cette quantité massive d'informations numériques permet par exemple, dans la mesure où elles sont offertes à l'ensemble du public, de disposer rapidement de l'état de la circulation routière via des applications.

Le recours aux big data a explosé depuis les débuts de la pandémie du COVID-19. La nécessité de faire face rapidement à un phénomène global, pour lequel les sources traditionnelles d'informations ne suffisent plus, explique largement cette accélération. Ainsi, dans beaucoup de pays industrialisés, le recours aux métadonnées a permis de valider, voire de corriger, des mesures de lutte contre la pandémie mises en place dans l'urgence. Ce fut notamment le cas dans le domaine de la mobilité et des activités économiques, nécessairement réduites en période de confinement. Par exemple, en utilisant des données d'une application de traçage (Cubiq), des chercheurs italiens⁴ ont rapidement pu mettre en lien les comportements de mobilité dans les régions italiennes avec l'évolution de la pandémie. Cela a permis d'évaluer sous quel délai les mesures de confinement

sont suivies d'effets. Un groupe de chercheurs suisses a pour sa part construit un instrument de surveillance de la consommation des ménages en utilisant les données des paiements par cartes bancaires. Ils ont ainsi pu évaluer en temps réel l'impact de certaines mesures sur le chiffre d'affaires des restaurateurs ou du commerce de détail³.

Quel avenir pour l'utilisation des big data ?

Les administrations chargées des thématiques sociétales, les organisations non gouvernementales engagées sur des questions liées à l'humain (migration, handicap, etc.), ou plus généralement les entreprises actives dans ces domaines, restent frileuses concernant ces développements statistiques. Dans une société pourtant largement connectée, les big data et les grandes bases statistiques restent sous-exploitées. Les raisons en sont diverses: prudence excessive face à des données peu précises, existence de méthodes de collecte dites traditionnelles (telles que les enquêtes, qui se sont également développées «en ligne» avec les *eSurveys*), doute quant à la capacité explicative de ces données, ou encore manque d'originalité

dans les approches pour recueillir des informations. Pour autant, de plus en plus d'acteurs du domaine public ou privé se penchent, et se pencheront ces prochaines années, sur ces données alternatives pour améliorer leur connaissance de la société ou de leur marché.

Mesurer ou quantifier, afin d'analyser des phénomènes socioéconomiques ou démographiques, ou de prévoir comment ces phénomènes évolueront, a de tout temps représenté un défi. Aujourd'hui, face à la multiplication des sources d'informations, l'enjeu est celui du tri: trier les données pour pouvoir identifier celles qui peuvent être utiles, et celles qui ne le sont pas. Il convient aussi de pouvoir valider les données sélectionnées, et ce en fonction de critères scientifiques, puis de les traduire en indicateurs permettant d'interpréter correctement les phénomènes étudiés et de les intégrer dans des systèmes de suivi (*monitoring*). L'utilisation des big data est dans ce cadre pertinente, notamment en complément aux informations recueillies de manière traditionnelle.

Cette démarche nécessite une approche rigoureuse: une mau-

vaïse interprétation pouvant résulter en des décisions... mal informées. Pouvoir et savoir naviguer dans cette diversité de données sans s'y perdre, et les utiliser à bon escient, seront gages d'une société de l'information informée. Ces défis sont au cœur du Certificat de formation continue (CAS) en Analyse des populations. Le premier module, organisé entre avril et mai 2022, porte spécifiquement sur la complémentarité des approches de recueil des données dans les domaines sociodémographiques. Les modules suivants permettent de se former à la construction, à partir d'un ensemble de données, d'indicateurs et d'outils de monitoring traduisant la complexité de la société et offrant, plus spécifiquement, des instruments sur lesquels formuler des politiques, des mesures ou des actions spécifiques. ■

1 Professeur ordinaire à l'Université de Genève
 2 <https://www.ipums.org>
 3 <https://monitoringconsumption.com/related-research>
 4 Vinceti M. et al. (2020), Lockdown timing and efficacy in controlling COVID-19 using mobile phone tracking. *eClinical Medicine* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100457>
 Plus d'informations sur le CAS en Analyse des populations sur <https://www.unige.ch/formcont/cours/populations>

Global electroshock

Watching the aurora borealis in Havana? Having our civilization reset back to the middle ages by frying all electronics? Losing control of all the earth's satellites at once? Just what effect would a powerful solar storm have on planet Earth in the modern age?



The aurora

KEVIN CRAMPTON, WHO

Where were you on July 23rd, 2012? You probably have no idea. Maybe it was a day much like any other in your life, no particular special moments, lost to the frailty of memory and the passage of time.

It could all have been very, very different, however. It very nearly was...

On that particular Monday, if the earth had been in another location in its orbit then you and everyone else on the planet would

probably have a very clear recollection of that particular day and possibly be getting over the consequences only now. It would have been spectacular, a once-in-several-generations event.

On that late July day, planet earth had a very close brush with an unusually powerful gust of the solar wind. A coronal mass ejection event at the surface of the sun had thrown out a huge plasma of charged particles that sped through the solar system and crossed our orbit some 17 hours later. This particular stream missed our world by a margin of only nine days, tiny in astronomical terms, and burned itself away harmlessly in the vacuum of space.

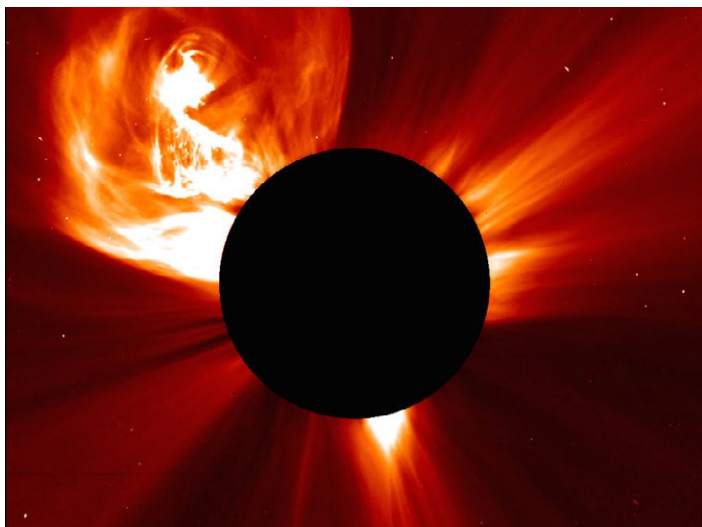
Solar storms like this are potentially dangerous because the charged particles of which they are made up interact with the earth's magnetic field to cause a geomagnetic storm. It's the same mechanism that creates the northern lights – the aurora borealis, and its southern twin – the aurora australis. On the surface of the planet, we are protected from these highly energetic particles by the earth's magnetic field that diverts them away. We are also protected by the thickness of our atmosphere which acts as a shield. Without these, we would be irradiated, and our DNA shredded as the particles pass through our bodies dispensing their energy causing cancers or even radiation sickness.

As the strength of a geomagnetic storm increases, the effect on our world becomes more noticeable of course.

On the 1st and 2nd of September 1859, for example, a storm with the same power as that of 2012 did score a direct bullseye on the Earth. The phenomenon was named the Carrington Event after the British astronomer that studied it and the auroras it created were so impressive that they extended away from the poles as far as Cuba and Colombia. The light of these exceptional northern lights was so bright that people awoke and started preparing for their day, thinking it must be the sunrise. Newsprint could be read at midnight by their glow.

The most worrying aspect for our modern civilization however is what happened to the world's telecommunication system in 1859. The electromagnetic activity was sufficient to induce a current in any long conducting material, such as a telegraph wire. As a result, the telegraph system failed globally, with stories of operators being shocked by their machines and sparks flying from telegraph poles. It was also said that telegraphists could disconnect their machines from their usual power source and still send morse messages along the wire using the ambient current induced by the storm!

This is the biggest concern for the world today. We live in a



The coronal mass ejection of July 23, 2012, at 12:24

civilization that is much more connected and dependent on our electronics than ever before. A global outage of telecommunication and power systems with damage due to overload would have much more serious consequences now than it did in the mid-19th century. Transformers, on which we rely to change the level of voltage and current, are particularly susceptible and older models would simply burn out under the bombardment of a cosmic storm.

It has been estimated that such an event today would cause up to 2.6 trillion US Dollars of damage to the United States alone, the equivalent of 15% GDP for the country. Recovery from such damage would take between 4 and 10 years. Look around your own home or workplace and

imagine how you would live and earn your wages if almost all electronics were simultaneously destroyed.

Today the earth is also better prepared than 1859, however. Monitoring of sunspot and mass ejection activity means that we would have between 8 and 20 hours warning of an imminent shower of solar particles. That would be enough time to take vulnerable systems offline and protect them. Most devices have built-in surge protection as well, but even with these defences a relatively weak storm caused a 9-hour outage of power across Quebec in March 1989. A storm in 1972 caused the accidental detonation of naval mines in Vietnam and another in 2005 knocked the GPS system offline. Solar storms are not to be dismissed lightly.

The potential outage of GPS is a major headache given our worldwide reliance to coordinate movements of everything from oil tankers to the satellites themselves.

At home, we can be prepared by ensuring our own surge protection devices are in place and unplugging all equipment if we know that a storm is expected. We can also create a “Faraday Cage”, placing delicate devices such as a laptop, a wind-up radio, and any other essential electronics inside a sealed metal box so that dangerous currents are channelled through the box itself and not the material inside. Objects placed in the box must be insulated however and not touch the metal sides.

Storms with the strength of a Carrington event happen about once every 150 years and with the next solar maximum predicted between 2023 and 2026 there is a good chance that we may experience an event at least once in our lifetimes. No one can fully predict

the effect this will have but planning for it as an inevitability and designing our infrastructure accordingly are essential steps.

But it’s not all doomsday and apocalyptic gloom, you can put away the sandwich board announcing that the “End of the World is nigh”. Gold diggers in the Australian desert in 1859 described the “unspeakable beauty” of the exceptional aurora, and the San Francisco Herald wrote,

“The whole sky appeared to undulate something like a field of grain in a high wind; the waters of the Bay reflected the brilliant hues of the Aurora. Nothing could exceed the grandeur and beauty of the sight; the effect was almost bewildering and was witnessed with mingled feelings of awe and delight by thousands.”

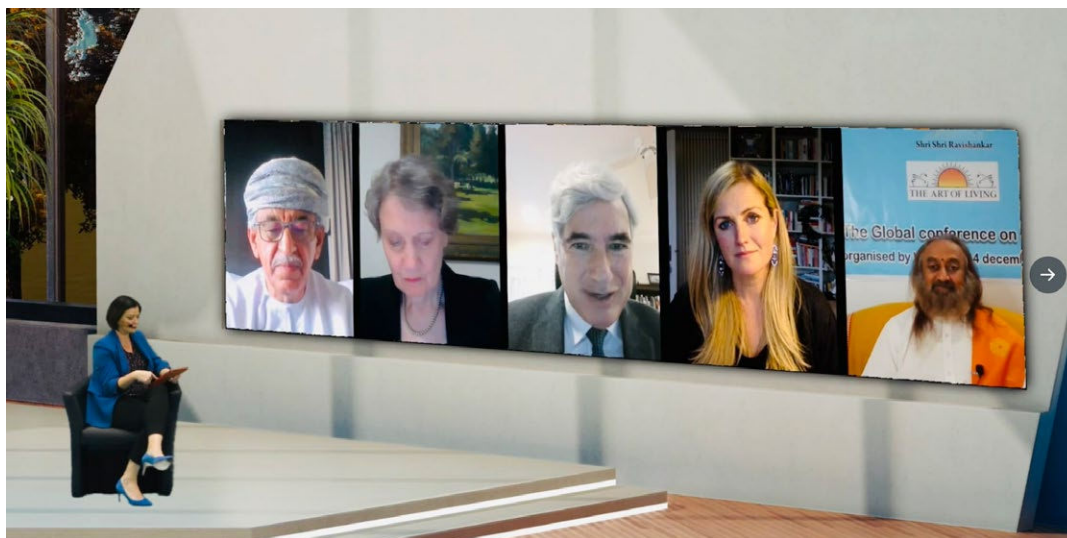
It would be a global phenomenon, a reminder of the immense power of our sun and certainly a day to remember. ■

The New Orleans Daily Picayune for September 3rd, 1859 had this to say on the effect of the spectacular aurora on the town’s drunks.

“It is an indisputable fact that old toppers, wholesale consumers of the alcoholic fluid, whose capacious stomachs could retain an enormous quantity of the «creature» with-out their heads or legs being in the least affected by it, have fallen dead drunk last night and last Sunday night, before they had imbibed their regular allowance, and through no other cause than the mysterious influence upon their system of the unexplained electrical phenomenon, shining overhead.”

COVID-19 and mental health

As COVID-19 vaccines are made available to the general population, we welcome the New Year with the hope of recovering from the devastating impacts of the pandemic in 2021.



Plenary 4 of the 10th GCHP titled 'Health Promotion in times of complexity and uncertainty: framing the well-being challenge, 14 December 2021, Virtual.

**NAJIA MUSOLINO¹,
FILIZ ODABAS-GELDIAY²**

Now, with more than 5 million deaths worldwide, the new variant Omicron is a reminder that the pandemic is far from over. This has indeed affected people of all ages. The fact that every 45 seconds someone, somewhere is committing suicide is an important reminder that more needs to be achieved³. The challenge of the century for all people and everywhere is to address the needs of the future generations beyond geographical, political, economic, and social boundaries. The 10th Global Conference of the World Health Organization (WHO) on Health Promotion hosted in Geneva and virtually on 13-15 December provided an opportunity to discuss how the health promotion community can drive and support redesign of economies

to prioritize the well-being of everyone, everywhere. "The pandemic has shown that when health is at risk, everything is at risk," said Director-General of WHO Tedros Athanom. "But the opposite is also true. When health is protected and promoted, individuals, families, communities, economies, and nations can thrive. That's why health must not be seen as a cost but as an investment in productive, resilient, and inclusive societies."

The 4th plenary session of the conference titled 'Health Promotion in times of complexity and uncertainty: framing the well-being challenge' gathered insights from Hon. Dr. Ahmed bin Mohamed Al-Saidi - Minister of Health of Oman, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar - globally revered spiritual and humanitarian

leader, Rt Hon. Helen Clark - Former Prime Minister of New Zealand, PMNCH Board Chair and Co-Chair of the WHO's Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, Dr. Katherine Trebeck - Wellbeing Economy Alliance, Dr. Juan Pablo Uribe - Director Global Health, Nutrition and Population and Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescent at the World Bank and Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge - WHO Regional Director for Europe. The dialogue moderated by Emmy-nominated journalist - Hannah Vaughan Jones included prospective analysis looking at the shift towards well-being in every aspect of life during times of significant change.

"Shared responsibility and collective action is the way forward for physical and mental well-being for all" was the call by the spiritual leader and Founder of Art of Living Foundation (AOLF) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. As nations worldwide mitigate the negative outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic, this message comes as an invitation to act now within our respective communities with a special focus on the most vulnerable. This includes the youth, the ageing populations, people with disabilities, those suffering from comorbidities such as cardiovascular disease, obesity, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, and other poverty related illnesses all shown to increase risk for worse outcomes from COVID-19 infection.



The 10th Global Conference on Health Promotion (GCHP) for Well-being, Equity, and Sustainable Development, 13-15 December 2022, Virtual – Organized by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Geneva Charter for Well-being developed before and during the 10th Global Conference on Health Promotion attended online by over 5000 experts from 149 countries provides a framework for a reinforced commitment of all stakeholders for enhanced collaborations and engagements by local and national governments, international agencies, actors of civil society and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of strategies for health and well-being.

More generally and beyond the context of the current pandemic, the worldwide statistics for stress, anxiety, and depression are alarming and increasing at a rapid rate. Stress in young people is known to influence academic performance. For example, in Switzerland, more than one in two students report experiencing difficulties in their studies and one in ten consider dropping them. Data released by the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) show that a quarter of them report a lack of motivation^{4,5}. Furthermore, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy issued an Advisory on the Youth Mental Health Crisis earlier this month. The support for youth mental health and well-being has become more important

now than ever in the U.S.⁶ According to the Surgeon General's Advisory, "Before the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health challenges were the leading cause of disability and poor life outcomes in young people, with up to 1 in 5 children ages 3 to 17 in the U.S. having a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder. Additionally, from 2009 to 2019, the share of high school students who reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness increased by 40%, to more than 1 in 3 students^{7,8,9}. Between 2007 and 2018, suicide rates among youth ages 10-24 in the U.S. increased by 57%, and early estimates show more than 6,600 suicide deaths among this age group in 2020."

Children and youth are likely to either become depressed or aggressive in such dire situations," says Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. He suggests ways to ease their lives to give them relief from peer pressure, stress, and tension that has magnified in this situation¹⁰. A new Yale study, featuring three wellness interventions in a randomized control trial, including AOLF's signature Sudarshan Kriya (SKY) Breath Meditation¹¹, reveals valuable insight into how the breath can enhance a range of well-being markers¹². The results

are astounding. The study found that practicing SKY, students reported improvements in six areas of well-being: depression, stress, mental health, mindfulness, positive affect, and social connectedness. In his NYT best-seller released in 2020, *Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art*, the author and journalist James Nestor credits SKY Breath Meditation as one of the most powerful techniques to reduce stress and improve overall well-being¹³.

Future generations are counting on us. Mental health is a priority more than ever, but more needs to be achieved in this area. Darshak Hathi, the President of the International Association for Human Values (IAHV), which is headquartered in Geneva and collaborates closely with AOLF has recently announced its plans to expand its mental health support programs, update research in the area and scale up interventions.

It is imperative to devise and implement innovative strategies to mitigate the impacts of the rising mental health crisis, which some experts also call the 'silent epidemic' within the pandemic. Because this is unlikely to be the last pandemic we will face, it is critical to use this once-in-a-lifetime chance to learn and develop

strategies for improved physical and mental health both for our current and future generations. ■

- 1 Chief Executive Officer, International Association for Human Values (IAHV)
- 2 Executive Director, IAHV- USA
- 3 <https://www.who.int/news/item/09-09-2019-suicide-one-person-dies-every-40-seconds>
- 4 <https://www.rts.ch/info/suisse/12.660.244-un-quart-des-etudiants-suisse-disent-manquer-de-motivation.html>
- 5 <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home.assetdetail.18.584.272.html>
- 6 <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/12/07/us-surgeon-general-issues-advisory-on-youth-mental-health-crisis-further-exposed-by-covid-19-pandemic.html>
- 7 https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6202a1.htm?s_cid=su6202a1_w
- 8 <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr69/nvsr-69-11-508.pdf>
- 9 https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/VSRRO16.pdf?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_axiosvitals&stream=top
- 10 <https://ssrv.org/blog/enriching-education-introducing-life-skills-mental-wellness-in-mainstream-education/>
- 11 <https://event.us.artofliving.org/us-en/online-course-2/>
- 12 <https://news.yale.edu/2020/07/27/improve-students-mental-health-yale-study-finds-teach-them-breathe>
- 13 https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/jul/26/every-breath-you-take-the-lost-art-of-breathing?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other



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BURKINA FASO

Filbert Tologo...

... acrobat-dancer, all in fusione

- *Bobo-Dioulasso, 1978*
- *Dance - Compagnie Filbert Tologo*
- *"The Grütli theater, where the Echos Festival is held, a festival I created which brings together dancers from different countries."*

newSpecial is delighted to include profiles presented by Zahi Haddad, in his recently-published book "126 Heartbeats for International Geneva". We thank the author and his publisher, Slatkine, for this exclusivity.

"I literally met International Geneva when I joined the company 'Foofwa d'immobilité' in the early 2000s." A group of European, African and South American musicians and dancers, led by choreographer Frédéric Gafner. Filbert Tologo thus remembers the welcome he received when arriving on the shores of Lake Geneva.

With joyful eyes. With a communicative smile, that of the kid he used to be in Bobo-Dioulasso and who still marvels at the world around him. He, who was noticed on the streets of his childhood. He, who performed acrobatics for fun, surprised to receive a few coins for his prowess.

Filbert is only ten years old and nicknamed "Bobo" because of his talent, which is still in the making. He meets up with a troupe of dancers, leaving far behind his life as a cultivator and herder in Burkina Faso, West Africa. This gives him further mastery in dance.

With this new family, Filbert wins two prizes as part of the National Culture Week of Bobo-Dioulasso. It was the beginning of the 1990s and he was barely entering adolescence. Curious, always listening, he perfects his dance steps, learns to twirl, perch on stilts, opening up to new techniques which he mastered, one after the other. Until traditional dance belonged to him entirely.

His tours reveal an exotic fusion of African history with new body language, images, with some added Western twists. Filbert discovers contemporary dance and combines it with his past. "African dance is very coded, energetic and follows the rhythm of percussion; and, all of a sudden, I projected myself into a world of more personal construction, having to convey more nuanced emotions and ideas." On this path, a master of dance influences Filbert: "It was Congo Alassane, a dancer trained by Béjart. I fell in love with his work, with his energy!"

With these dawning talents and interests, Filbert dares to launch his own company, Bobo. Filbert is the first to introduce this style: "I was told that it was the dance of the Whites, when today everyone has adopted the contemporary dance and even struggles to keep room for the traditional dance." In Bobo-Dioulasso, Filbert meets his future wife in the early 2000s. A woman from Geneva, who takes him to the end of Lake Geneva and introduces him to the celebrations of the Fête de la Musique and its ethnomusicology workshops, which Filbert starts leading. Filbert is now in the Geneva orbit and is especially eager to cross paths with the master of all masters... Maurice Béjart. Béjart and Filbert meet and he is asked to choreograph an African creation for Béjart's "Around the world in eighty minutes". An "eternal honor!"

With his Geneva company, Filbert explores movement and its expression of the human being,

his wounds and his travels – the unknown and emigration, identity, belonging, experiences that have marked his own life. The man who tries to control everything. Surrounded by colorful artists, Filbert travels around the planet, learns cultures, discovers his own humanity and shares it through dance with his audiences. With Genevan representatives of the United Nations. "This is my strength. And I do not forget my artistic roots." And, as if it were necessary to further affirm his commitment, Filbert creates Echos, a contemporary African dance festival that has become biennial, "to give the stage to African dancers and to the fusion of genres." To his mixed soul, growing every day a little more. ■



International Uilleann Piping Day: Global Celebration

ITA MARGUET

As a worldwide event it is celebrated on 7 November each year as a day of piping activity organised and coordinated by the Dublin Pipers Club aimed at raising awareness of this iconic Irish musical instrument. It has been developed in Ireland over centuries to become the most elaborate and musically sophisticated form of bagpipe in the world. A Short History of Uilleann Pipes published in History of Ireland, Issue 4, July/August 2018, Vol 26 describes it as a “complex sophisticated instrument that can deliver a unique form of original music.”

In 2015 Ireland ratified the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted in 2003. Three of the prestigious awards have recognised Ireland’s unique history, heritage and identity. In 2017 Uilleann Piping preceded the UNESCO inscription of the sport of Hurling camogie (2018) and Harping (2019) as constituting precious parts of the world’s cultural heritage.

President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins expressed the award for Uilleann Piping as a “welcome and much deserved tribute of the sounds and culture of our island... the

inclusion represents an honour for a most valuable part of Irish culture, and for Uilleann piping throughout the world, and is a valuable recognition of the skills, imagination, creativity and music traditions... a reputation which is greatly enhanced by our crafts people who have passed their love of music and talent from generation to generation down through the centuries. Our music and craftwork connect us in profound ways, weaving together cultural vision”.

Cultural Memory and Cultural Vision

The Uilleann Pipe, in Irish *piob uilleann*, ‘elbow pipes’ are played held across the knee using bellows worked by the elbow with three extra pipes on which chords can be played. They are unique amongst bagpipes for their sensitive tone, quality and complexity. They are a difficult instrument to learn, tune and balance, and to maintain in good playing order. They were developed during the second half of the eighteenth century; by the end of the nineteenth century their development was complete. It is a relatively quiet indoor instrument that has gained popularity.

Pipers were never part of the original culture of the Gaelic society like harpers, scribes and

poets. Earlier known as ‘union pipes’ the sound of the Irish Uilleann pipe is different from other forms of bagpipes by its notably quieter and sweeter musical tone and wide range of notes produced by intricate playing techniques. In contrast the Highland Pipes (also known historically as the great Irish War pipes) were used in outdoor settings, primarily on the battlefield and today continue to be used at official parades for formal, civic and ceremonial occasions.

The earliest reference to a bagpipe bellows is by Michael Pretorius, ca. 1619 in ‘Syntagma Musicum’.¹ He describes a set of French bellows fed by pipes with shuttle drones or tuning sliders. Small pipes, along with the keyed chanter producing melody, seem to have come to England and Scotland with traders from the Low Countries and France. The French bellows was soon adopted in the Border and Northumbrian pipe that, in turn, was copied by the Irish where the tradition continues. ■

¹ **The Concise History of the Bagpipe** by Frank J. Timoney, The Uilleann Pipe (copyright 2007-2008.)

Note: Acknowledgement is given to encyclopaedic and other sources used in preparation of this text. It follows titles **The Uilleann Pipe: Cultural Memory and Cultural Vision**, December 2017 and **The Harp of Ireland: History, Tradition, Emblem**, December 2019 by Ita Marguet.



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La Suisse inconnue, à la découverte des 26 cantons

Canton d'Appenzell Rhodes intérieures: Schlatt-Haslen

Une série de 26 impressions de lieux plutôt inconnus – loin du tourisme.

CARLA EDELEMBOS,
UN SOCIETY OF WRITERS

Le canton d'Appenzell, qui avait rejoint la confédération suisse en 1513, fut divisé en deux après la Réforme en 1597: les districts où les habitants avaient choisi la nouvelle foi promue par le réformateur suisse Zwingli, devenaient Appenzell Rhodes extérieures, et ceux gardant la foi catholique romaine, Appenzell Rhodes intérieures. Même encore maintenant on perçoit cette différence, surtout dans les églises (généralement ouvertes dans Rhodes intérieures et fermées dans Rhodes extérieures, ouvertes seulement pour le culte).

Pour commencer notre visite au demi-canton catholique, nous logeons dans une petite auberge familiale à Schlatt, un

lieu qui constitue un seul district (le demi-canton est organisé en districts, pas en communes) avec le village de Haslen. Perché sur les hauteurs très vertes des collines Appenzelloises, Schlatt offre une belle vue sur le chef-lieu qui a donné son nom au canton. Le panorama est sûrement splendide sur les montagnes environnantes, surtout sur le Säntis, le sommet d'Appenzell, mais quand nous sommes là, il fait gris et sombre. Pendant notre séjour, les nuages ne se lèveront jamais pour dévoiler le beau tableau promis.

À côté de l'auberge se trouve la charmante église St. Joseph qui surplombe la colline et dont les cloches sonnent tous les quarts d'heure, même pendant la nuit. Heureusement, les fenêtres de l'hôtel sont bien insonorisées ce

qui nous permet de dormir paisiblement. Je m'imagine l'église un endroit populaire pour les mariages, et peut-être les familles se recueillent-elles après dans la grande salle de l'auberge pour faire la fête. Mais pendant notre visite tout est calme et nous pouvons contempler l'intérieur de l'église en style baroque nouveau en toute tranquillité. L'église date des années 1910s et fut conçue par l'architecte saint-gallois August Hardegger, un des représentants les plus importants du style de l'historicisme dans l'architecture suisse.

Dans une petite ruelle à côté de l'église, nous voyons des enfants qui courent vers l'école primaire. Le village de Schlatt compte 380 habitants, ce qui ne suffit pas pour remplir les classes. Donc

les petits vont à l'école à Schlatt et y sont rejoints par les petits de Haslen. Les plus grands au contraire descendent à Haslen pour suivre leurs cours. Un système qui semble plaire à tout le monde!

Nous aussi nous descendons vers Haslen pour continuer notre visite. À mi-chemin, parmi les collines douces et vertes où paissent des vaches, nous nous arrêtons dans une petite fromagerie familiale et artisanale qui vend ses fromages à la ferme. Nous dégustons le vrai fromage d'Appenzell, crémeux et délicieux, qui fond sur la langue. En été, les vaches passent trois mois à l'alpage du Seealp, mais comme nous visitons en automne elles sont de retour à la ferme. Par ailleurs, si le cœur vous dit, en été



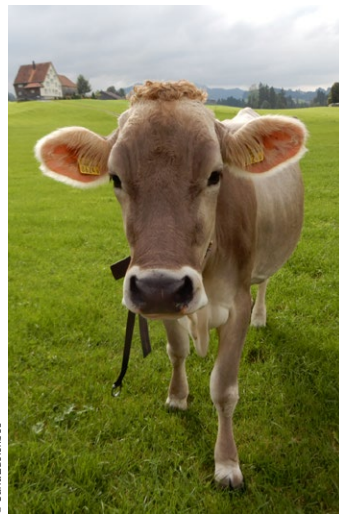
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vous pouvez ici louer une vache, pour un ou plusieurs jours. Le loyer inclut votre propre vache, à traire vous-même, ainsi qu'une nuitée au mayen et une sortie en bateau sur le lac de l'alpage.

À Haslen, la grande église de pèlerinage Maria Hilf (aussi conçue par Hardegger) date de 1901 et remplace l'église baroque du 17^e siècle. Plusieurs œuvres d'art de l'ancienne église ont trouvée une place dans la nouvelle basilique comme le tableau de la vierge qui se trouve à Haslen depuis 1649 et qui a attiré des milliers de pèlerins. Mais nous trouvons plus attrayantes les peintures du début du 20^e siècle. Le plafond, peint par l'artiste saint-gallois Carl Glauner, montre en cinq tableaux, l'arbre généalogique de Jésus, depuis Adam

et Ève à la vierge Marie avec enfant. Les peintures des murs datent des années 1920, en style typiquement Art Nouveau ont été créées par l'artiste Ferdinand Kaltenbacher, qui était d'origine allemande mais vivait en Suisse depuis la première guerre mondiale. La richesse de l'intérieur nous fait penser aux églises byzantines. On pourrait passer des heures à regarder les portraits et les détails!

Enfin nous partons et traversons un pont de bois couvert. De l'autre côté de la rivière Rotbach, nous entrons dans les Rhodes extérieures, pour visiter le couvent Wonnenstein, fondé en 1379 et entièrement rebâti au 17^e siècle. Par les aléas de l'histoire, le bâtiment se trouve sur territoire «réformé», ce qui bien sûr n'était

pas tolérable pour un monastère catholique. Une solution ne fut trouvée qu'en 1870: le bâtiment et tout ce qui se trouve à l'intérieur appartient désormais aux Rhodes intérieures, même si les terres autour font partie de Rhodes extérieures! Le couvent dépend donc bien de Haslen, qui se trouve juste de l'autre côté de la rivière. L'église héberge une copie de la madone noire d'Einsiedeln; son intérieur est sombre et nécessite des restaurations. En fait, le monastère est presque abandonné, nous rencontrons la seule nonne qui y vit encore. Elle nous raconte sa lutte pour garantir la continuité de la vie religieuse dans le couvent qui est menacé de fermeture. En vue de l'hiver qui approche, nous achetons, au travers de la fenêtre à treillis qui marque la clôture du couvent,

un cordial de son apothèque qui vend des médicaments naturels.

Ainsi fortifiés, nous concluons notre visite. Nous sommes un peu tristes de devoir quitter Appenzell sans même avoir pu bénéficier d'un bref aperçu du Santis. Nous reviendrons une fois quand il fera beau pour admirer le beau panorama! ■

Depuis Genève, prenez le train en direction de St. Gallen. Changez pour le train en direction d'Appenzell et sortez à Teufen. Depuis Teufen, prenez le bus 191 pour Appenzell qui vous amène en 6 minutes à Haslen. Durée du trajet: 4 heures et 18 minutes. A Schlatt, Gasthaus Bären accueille des visiteurs. La fromagerie Seealp à Haslen se trouve à Leimensteigstrasse 31 (site web: seealpchaes.ch). Le couvent Wonnenstein se trouve à Niedersteufen, l'apothèque est ouverte les jours ouvrables de 14h à 17h.

1 Le rhode était une entité territoriale dans le Moyen Âge.

Dans la mesure de l'impossible

A creation by Tiago Rodrigues

1 to 13 February 2022

At Comédie de Genève

Tiago Rodrigues sets out from the international district in Geneva to meet the men and women who make humanitarian work their profession. Inspired by their testimonies, this multilingual show with French surtitles exposes the dilemmas of these women and men who come and go between tormented zones of intervention and a peaceful "home". Investigating field engagement has led Rodrigues to reflect on the impact of artistic engagement. Should we save the world or fictionalise it? Should we throw ourselves into battle or condemn it? Act directly on reality or speak about it?

Tickets
comédie.ch
+4122 320 50 01



ALFRED DE ZAYAS, UN SOCIETY OF WRITERS



Frison

*Dans le bruit de la multitude
Je cherche une vérité à moi.
Je cherche la plénitude
Mais elle échappe à mes doigts.*

*Dans le silence de la solitude
je cherche la foi, je cherche la joie,
mais je ne trouve que l'habitude
— et j'ai le mal de toi.*

*Je suis homme de calme raison
qui se méfie de la passion.*

*Et pourtant
Il arrive que je m'étonne :
Quand tu arrives, quand tu es là
Moi, je frissonne.*

*Certes, je frissonne
Comme un garçon —
mais guère par peur
sinon d'un vrai bonheur.*





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10th Vivicità Run Race 2022 Back again!

Sunday April 3rd, 2022 in Geneva

After postponement of the 2020 and 2021 races, the tenth edition of Vivicità will take place in just a few weeks from now. An ever-growing number of runners are participating every year, attracted by an unanimously appreciated running route.

Running in Blue in support of Autism

VIVICITTÀ is one of the most important and popular mass sport events as more than 70,000 runners are participating every year in more than 50 cities worldwide. Ideally, these races take place simultaneously (same day, same hour). In Geneva, the race is being organised by SATUS, a multiple-sport non-profit-making association which will share the profit with autism Genève.

Which distance is best for you?

The race includes running distances of 10 km for adults, 1.5 and 2.7 km for kids and young people, as well as 5 km for less trained runners. Or you may prefer the Nordic Walking Race over 10 km.

The Itinerary

Start and finish are situated close to the Bains des Pâquis. The race then goes along the lakeside and up through the Botanic Garden, across the area of several international organisations, the park of Château de Penthes and the village of Pregny-Chambésy before returning down to Perle du Lac announcing the finish is no longer far away. ■

Information/Registration:
www.vivicità-geneve.ch

The event is sponsored by the Canton and the City of Geneva as well as by the Municipality of Pregny-Chambésy.

LA VIVICITTA COURT EN BLEU POUR L'AUTISME



autisme
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PARCOURS DE 1,5 / 5 / 10 KM

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© Claude Maillard

Panorama sur le lac Majeur depuis la Tour Castellana de la Rocca d'Angera, forteresse appartenant à la famille Borromeo depuis 1449.

Italie (2/2)

Les îles Borromées

En son temps, Montesquieu disait que c'était le plus bel endroit du monde. Lieu unique, on peut y admirer des jardins suspendus et des palais baroques qui se reflètent dans l'eau. Dans leur écrin d'azur, au cœur du lac Majeur, ce sont les îles Borromées.

CLAUDE MAILLARD

Ambiance farniente, bruschetta, coppa, mozzarella, pizza, huile d'olive et vespa... la dolce vita. Il suffit parfois de traverser une petite frontière pour être totalement dépaycé. Direction l'Italie du Nord...

Imaginez-vous sur les quais de la petite ville piémontaise d'Arona, au coucher du soleil, un verre de Spritz à la main... C'est sublime! Face à nous, la Rocca di Angera domine majestueusement la

rive lombarde du lac Majeur. La forteresse occupait une position stratégique pour le contrôle du trafic. La tradition historiographique lie l'histoire d'Angera à la famille Visconti et à son succès après la bataille de Desio qu'elle remporta en 1277. À l'époque de la République ambrosienne, le Conseil des Neuf Cents de la ville de Milan ratifia l'achat d'Angera, de la forteresse et de sa paroisse par Vitalien Ier Borromeo le 18 janvier 1449. La Rocca di Angera devint ainsi la résidence et le



© Claude Mallard

Isola dei Pescatori («île des pêcheurs») avec au centre le clocher de l'ancienne église San Vittore.



© Claude Mallard

Sur Isola Madre, la chapelle funéraire voulue par Vitaliano VIII Borromeo en 1858.



© Claude Mallard

Face aux îles Borromées, sur la rive lombarde du lac Majeur, l'ermitage de Santa Caterina del Sasso datant du XIV^e siècle.

symbole de l'ordre politique de la famille à laquelle elle appartient encore de nos jours.

Grâce à ses exceptionnels dons commerciaux, Vitalien I^{er} Borromeo jouit d'un grand prestige à la cour des Visconti et fut le fondateur de la fortune familiale en Lombardie. Il fut le premier à investir, au nord de la région de Novara autour du lac Majeur, ce qui constituera le noyau des terres formant l'État Borromée. C'est ainsi qu'entre le XIV^e et le XVII^e siècle les Borromeo ont pris le contrôle de nombreux fiefs de la région. Ils les ont organisés comme un État quasiment indépendant, couvrant presque la moitié de l'actuelle province Verbano-Cusio-Ossola. Cet État a pris fin en 1797 avec l'invasion de Milan par Napoléon Bonaparte

qui a révoqué tous les privilèges et juridictions. Pourtant, les Borromeo ont pu conserver l'archipel formé par les îles proches de la ville de Stresa, perles du lac Majeur, plus connues sous le nom des îles Borromées que nous pouvons visiter et admirer aujourd'hui.

Dans son écrin de verdure, le lac Majeur De l'autre côté des Alpes, l'Italie regorge de merveilles débordantes de charme. Dans le nord du pays, dans un cadre enchanteur, il est possible de profiter de la verdure qui entoure les grandes étendues d'eau que sont les lacs, d'authentiques joyaux étincelants blottis au cœur des montagnes. Parmi ceux-ci, le lac Majeur, à cheval sur le Piémont, la Lombardie et le canton suisse

du Tessin. D'origine glaciaire, c'est le lac le plus important d'Italie après le lac de Garde. D'une superficie de 212 km² (dont 80% en Italie), il s'étire sur 65 km de long et sa plus grande largeur est de 5 km, pour une profondeur maximale de 372 m. Haut lieu touristique italo-suisse, ses eaux d'un bleu profond se couvrent parfois d'une brume qui flotte à sa surface, enveloppant un décor romantique de souvenirs de la Belle Époque. Des compagnies de bateaux assurent quotidiennement la liaison entre toutes les villes côtières (Stresa, Arona, Verbania, Locarno...) et les trois îles Borromées ouvertes au public – Isola Bella, Isola Madre et Isola dei Pescatori. Isolino di San Giovanni et le rocher de Malghera font également partie de l'archipel mais ne se visitent pas.

Isola Bella, la plus connue, a souvent été comparée à un navire qui sillonne paresseusement les eaux du lac. En effet, sa forme rappelle celle d'un splendide vaisseau orné de jardins suspendus et de très belles architectures. Il ne reste qu'une petite partie du village primitif de pêcheurs, avec ses pittoresques maisons aux toits rouges et ses rues étroites. Le reste de l'île a été transformé par Charles III Borromeo et son fils Vitaliano IV qui en poursuivit les travaux. Et ce fut ainsi que le nom d'Isola di San Vittore laissa bientôt la place à celui plus adapté d'Isola Isabella (en l'honneur de la femme de Charles III), devenu ensuite Isola Bella. Aujourd'hui, la renommée mondiale de l'île est liée surtout au Palazzo Borromeo et à ses jardins. Dès qu'on pénètre à l'intérieur du palais, on s'engage



Stendhal, Wagner, Napoléon Bonaparte et bien d'autres personnages illustres ont été charmés par les fascinants jardins d'Isola Bella.



L'imposant Palazzo Borromeo, palais baroque édifié au XVIIe siècle sur Isola Bella.

dans un fascinant voyage à travers les fastes du passé fait de grandes réceptions et de repas partagés avec des hôtes illustres. Une succession de salons richement ornés abritant un somptueux mobilier et de précieuses collections de peintures et de tapisseries s'offrent à nous. Le sous-sol, dont les pièces ont été transformées en grottes aux murs revêtus de cailloux et de coquillages, permettait de passer les chaudes journées d'été au frais et regroupe aujourd'hui de nombreux vestiges archéologiques. Les jardins, véritables oasis de tranquillité et de sérénité, devaient être autrefois le lieu idéal pour reposer le corps et l'esprit. Architecture (dont le théâtre en plein air) et nature se fondent ici en une parfaite harmonie dans une étonnante conception de dix terrasses descendant vers le lac, axe central de toute la composition.

Isola Madre, la plus étendue des îles, s'oppose au caractère maniéré et baroque d'Isola Bella par sa beauté plus naturelle et sauvage. Au début du XVI^e siècle, Lancelotto Borromeo fit commencer les travaux de transformation du lieu, repris à sa mort par Renato Borromeo qui appela, pour terminer le palais, l'architecte Pellegrino Tibaldi. Il s'agit d'un imposant édifice situé sur la rive méridionale de

l'île et accessible par un escalier. L'ameublement des salles, aux décors originaux et raffinés, évoque des scènes de la vie quotidienne de l'époque passée; même les tables sont minutieusement dressées. Le palais abrite en outre une importante collection de tableaux du XVII^e siècle et une précieuse collection de marionnettes et de décors utilisés autrefois pour présenter de divertissants spectacles théâtraux. Il est entouré d'un très beau parc parcouru d'amples allées joliment fleuries. Grâce à un climat particulièrement doux, des plantes tropicales côtoient une végétation méditerranéenne où batifolent en toute liberté d'adorables paons. Face au palais, là où s'élevait auparavant l'église San Vittore, se dresse maintenant la chapelle funéraire voulue par Vitaliano VIII Borromeo en 1858.

Isola dei Pescatori, la seule des trois îles Borromées à ne jamais avoir appartenu à la famille Borromeo, est la plus petite de l'archipel. Avec ses ruelles étroites bordées de typiques maisons à plusieurs étages et ses barques caractéristiques amarrées au petit port, elle a gardé son cachet primitif et abrite une cinquantaine de résidents permanents. Ses origines sont imprécises. Cependant, elle fut habitée dès le XI^e siècle, date à

laquelle l'église de San Vittore a été érigée. Remaniée plusieurs fois, elle conserve à l'intérieur l'abside de l'ancienne construction romane dédiée au martyr San Gandolfo. Malheureusement, il ne reste actuellement plus qu'une vingtaine de pêcheurs sur l'île. Les filets de pêche autrefois étendus sont devenus rares, les balcons ne sont plus utilisés pour faire sécher le poisson, et les échoppes jadis remplies de toutes sortes de victuailles ont laissé places aux marchands de souvenirs pour touristes, aux restaurants et aux vendeurs de glaces. Mais «l'île des pêcheurs» conserve néanmoins un charme bien particulier.

Adorées par Ernest Hemingway et, plus récemment, par certains membres de la Famille royale d'Angleterre, les îles Borromées ne peuvent que vous émerveiller face à tant de beauté.

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